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THE GT KING SPEAKS TO MN ABOUT HIS GLITTERING CAREER P14

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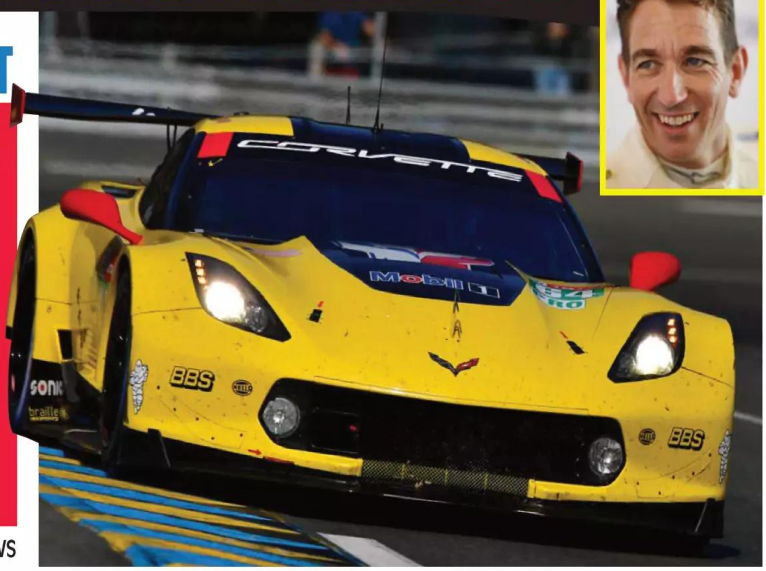

Britain's World Rally Championship round as GB is axed for 2021 as NI talks ramp up

BACK IT OR LOSE IT: NI MP PAISLEY URGES FANS TO SUPPORT UK WRC BID

Britain's WRC round is now hanging by a thread

By Graham Lister

There will be no home world championship rally in 2021 after efforts to switch the UK's counter from Wales to Northern Ireland failed.

Rally Northern Ireland had been set to take over from Rally GB as the UK round, but the worsening Covid-19 crisis forced Tourism NI to hold back its planned funding for the proposed August event.

However, Rally Northern Ireland is in the frame for a 2022 calendar slot with Ian Paisley MP using an exclusive interview with Motorsport News to urge mass support for the bid, which has the backing of WRC Promoter and the FIA.

Belgium's Ypres Rally has been called up to take the UK's place on what is expected to remain a 12-round schedule.

Full story, P8

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CLASSIC SLIPPERY ANNE RIDES AGAIN!

Why an Austin 7 Special is turning heads P18

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X-Flow ally radiator £179.60 £215.52
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Classic Ford wheels from £69.00 £82.80

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Shock absorber top caps	pair	£13.90	£16.68
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Oil line bulkhead grommet		£5.10	£6.12
Brake servo rod bellows		£5.20	£6.24

PLEASE NOTE: All prices in Red are EXCLUSIVE OF VAT

COMMENT

Photo: Hyundai Press, Gary Hawkins, Motorsport Images DPPI, Matt Bull

There are choppy waters ahead for Britain's round of the World Rally Championship

WHY RALLY GB NEEDS A FUTURE

For those in the know, the news that Rally GB will be missing from the World Rally Championship line-up in 2021 was hardly a surprise. But the fact it has now been rubber-stamped means that there has to be some frantic work in the background to make sure that the globe's finest mixed-surface drivers can be seen on these shores in the future.

An event in the British Isles has been part of the World Rally Championship since it was first created back in 1973. That is quite some heritage. The stages and the challenge on offer in rallying in the UK is something that all of the top-flight drivers enjoy, and it is unthinkable that a round will be missing from the calendar for long.

The desire to get a replacement for Wales Rally GB, which has run its term when it comes from backing from the bigwigs in the principality, rests solely with Northern Ireland.

There is a huge passion to get the WRC a new home in Northern Ireland and hundreds of hours of work has already gone in to the planning of such a round. However, the clock has run out and when the music has stopped, GB has been left off the line-up for 2021. Given the perilous state of the national rallying scene at the moment, this is a kick in the teeth that the discipline doesn't need right now.

We have our fingers and everything else crossed that the plans to relocate the event to Northern Ireland reach fruition. Far from being merely a feather in the cap for this country to host a WRC round, it is the pinnacle that sits on top of all the levels of rallying in the UK. That mean its place on the calendar is simply crucial.

Elsewhere in this issue, we pose the MN readers' questions to sportscar king Oliver Gavin. He tells us of his path through junior single-seater racing that took him agonisingly close to a seat in Formula 1: he actually had one until the rug was pulled from under his feet. Nevertheless, he was picked up by Chevrolet and has gone on to amass a collection of silverware that any British racer would be envious of.

Paul Lawrence looks at the remarkable story of the recreation of Slippery Anne, a hillclimbing Austin 7 special that evokes memories from a different generation. Luke Barry explores the passion UK rally drivers have for tackling events in Belgium, while Graham Keilloh unearths the story of up-and-coming single-seater racer Alex Quinn.

Matt James
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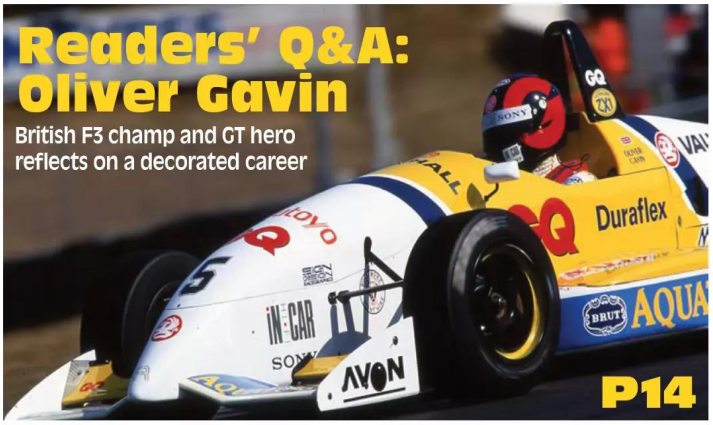

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IN BRIEF

Aston's F1 teaser

The Aston Martin F1 team, which has rebranded the Racing Point operation, will reveal its new livery in a special event at Gaydon in February. The team has put teasers on social media ahead of the launch of Lance Stroll and new signing Sebastian Vettel's 2021 racer, which many fans are hoping will be clothed in British Racing Green. "We've had almost a year of preparation to reach this point and we're really looking forward to seeing the reaction when we finally unveil our new identity as the Aston Martin Formula 1 Team," said team principal Otmar Szafnauer.

Williams-Merc tie-up

The Williams F1 team has forged stronger links with Mercedes. The British team, which is under new ownership, is hoping the tie-up will help it move up the grid. Next year's new deal, in line with F1's next rule change, will include transferable components – including gearboxes – alongside its engine deal. "F1 is always evolving, and as a team we must be agile to react to the current climate in order to put the team in the best position to be competitive," said team principal Simon Roberts.

John Hogan

Australian John Hogan, the former sponsorship boss of Marlboro, has passed away after contracting Covid. He was responsible for the cigarette firm's spend in motorsport, and helped Ron Dennis revive McLaren's fortunes in the early 1980s into the multiple title-winning team it went on to become. He was also heavily involved in all areas of motorsport and was also responsible for funding the development of several young drivers through the firm's backing in the lower rungs of single-seater racing.

Joest name returns

Glickenhaus has joined forces with the legendary Joest team as it plots its entry into the new endurance racing Hypercar era. It is planning to run its 007 LMH model in the World Endurance Championship and at Le Mans in 2021 and has enlisted the help of the 11-time Le Mans-winning team, alongside assistance from Podium Advanced Technologies. Most recently, Joest had been responsible for the Mazda attack in the IMSA Sportscar Championship.

IndyCar delayed start

The opening round of the 2021 IndyCar series, which was due to take place at St Petersburg, has been delayed from March 7 to April 25 amid the growing concerns over the global health pandemic. It means that the contest is now due to start at the Barber Motorsports Park on April 11 instead before heading to Florida for the rescheduled St Petersburg event. There are currently 17 races on the roster for this season with the season finale due to take place at Long Beach on September 26.

AUSTRALIAN AND CHINESE GRANDS PRIX FACE UNCERTAIN 2021 FUTURE

Pandemic worries mean races could be postponed or even axed completely

By Matt James

The start of the 2021 Formula 1 season is under a cloud as bosses of the Australian Grand Prix have yet to confirm the opening race, due to take place on March 19-21, while Chinese Grand Prix chiefs are also seeking a postponement.

The increasing concerns over the global health pandemic and the difficulty of travelling have put a question mark over the opening section of the 2021 calendar.

A spokesman for the state of Victoria, where the Australian Grand Prix is held in Melbourne, said: "The government will continue to prioritise public health considerations while protecting our major events calendar. Discussions between the Australian Grand Prix Corporation, the government and F1 management about the F1 calendar for 2021 are ongoing."

The Australian Grand Prix Corporation said it would provide "further detail upon finalisation of arrangements with all parties in the coming weeks". It is understood that F1 management could look to reschedule the race for later on in the season.

Teams and drivers travelled to the Albert Park venue last season just as the global pandemic spread throughout the globe, and the event was called off at the last minute. Should the Australian race be axed, the opening round of the 2021 campaign is likely to be the Bahrain Grand Prix on March 28.

Bosses of the Chinese Grand Prix have also asked F1 heads to delay their event. The race, which was also cancelled in 2020, is due to take place on April 11. Yibin Yang, the general manager of Chinese race promoter Juss Event, was quoted in local media. He said: "Despite the calendar being in place as usual, I think it's hugely uncertain the F1 race would take place in the first half of the year, in April.

"We aim to swap it to the second half of the year, and we have formally submitted the request that we hope to move it to the second half of the year."

Photos: Motorsport Images

Australian Grand Prix is now unlikely

Albon will be part of the DTM line-up this season

Albon finds a home in DTM amid Red Bull F1 duties

Formula 1 refugee Alex Albon will tackle the DTM in 2021 in a Red Bull-backed programme.

The Briton, who was demoted to the role of Red Bull's reserve driver after a disappointing grand prix campaign in 2020, will partner New Zealand's racer Liam Lawson. Lawson, 18, finished last year's FIA Formula 3 championship in fifth place. A third driver will take Albon's place when the Thai driver is called up to perform his F1 roles at Red Bull.

Red Bull's driver adviser Helmut Marko said that the new programme would offer Albon a challenge for 2021. "The DTM, with a high-class field, is an interesting platform and a real challenge, both for successful race drivers like Alex Albon as for our Red Bull junior driver Lawson," he said.

There has been no announcement regarding which cars Albon and Lawson will use, or with which team they will run with.

Formula 1 set to look to the Middle East for pre-season testing

The traditional pre-season Formula 1 testing sessions seem likely to be switched to Bahrain for 2021.

Running was due to take place in Barcelona as usual, but the increasingly unclear start to the season has meant that F1 bosses have been forced into a rethink. There were due to be three days of running in Spain, but there has been a tacit agreement that it would make more sense to move the running to the Middle East. The team's kit could then remain in the country ahead of what is likely to be the opening race at the end of March, depending on the future of the Australian Grand Prix.

Bahrain has previously held pre-season testing in 2014, with a pair of four-day sessions ahead of the introduction of the V6 hybrid era.

In other news, F1 bosses have confirmed that it is considering a proposal by teams to move the start times of the European grands prix back to 1400hrs.

CHILTON TO JOIN MORGAN IN CICELEY'S MAIDEN BMW TOURING CAR ATTACK

Multiple British Touring Car Championship race-winner Tom Chilton has signed to drive for the Ciceley Motorsport team in 2021 handling one of its new BMW 330i M Sport machines.

The 2010 BTCC Independents Trophy winner will line up alongside Adam Morgan in the Lancashire team in its maiden campaign with the rear-wheel-drive, WSR-built two-litre turbocharged machines.

The 35-year-old Chilton, a 14-time winner in the BTCC, returned to the series in 2017 after a stretch in the World Touring Car Championship. He finished 10th in the points last year in a BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R.

Chilton said: "Adam [Morgan] and I get along really well, we will work as hard as required with team engineer Steve Farrell to ensure we are at the front of the pack straight away. I make no secret of my desire to change my lucky racing number 3 into the coveted number 1 and truly believe that the team will provide me with the platform required to achieve my aim."

Team head Russell Morgan, father of Adam, said that he hoped Chilton's experience would help push the squad to a new level in this year's campaign. Morgan Sr said: "I have only ever been racing because I enjoy it, it's something that I have always done, but we have made massive investment into the team this year and need results. It was of the utmost importance that we secured a driver who brings experience, technical ability and is able to move us forward as a team."

The opening rounds of this year's British Touring Car Championship are due to take place at Brands Hatch on April 3-4.

Ciceley's new BMW

Tom Chilton: team change

Norris: under the weather

Norris forced to isolate after contracting Covid

McLaren F1 star Lando Norris is about to finish an isolation period after being tested positive for Covid during a holiday.

The 21-year-old, who finished ninth in the F1 standings last season, reported that he had lost his sense of taste and smell, and was immediately checked for the virus. The results came back to confirm he had contracted Covid.

A statement from the team read: "McLaren can confirm that Lando tested positive for Covid-19 in Dubai. He is on holiday ahead of a training camp and is now self-isolating at his hotel for 14 days."

It follows other positive tests for Formula 1 drivers Sergio Perez and Lance Stroll last season. World champion Lewis Hamilton also contracted the virus and was forced to miss the Sakir Grand Prix in December.

Photo: Jakob Ebrey, Drew Gibson, TF Sport, Argenti Motorsport

Heritage covers FF1600 'halcyon'

HERITAGE FF1600 TO SUPPORT BRITISH GT AT OULTON PARK

James Beckett's championship for FF1600 'halcyon days' pre-1993 cars gets "out of the blue" British GT and F3 slot

By Graham Keilloh

The Heritage Formula Ford championship for pre-1993 FF1600 cars will support the British GT and BRDC Formula 3 championships at their season-opening meeting at Oulton Park on April 3-5.

Prolific Formula Ford organiser James Beckett introduced the Heritage category in 2018 for cars considered from FF1600's 'halcyon days'. It attracted 22 cars to its season-closing Donington Park meeting last December.

Beckett's Champion of Brands FF1600 series also supported British GT and F3 on the Brands Hatch GP circuit last August. Heritage will also make a second 2021 Oulton visit at the track's August Gold Cup meeting.

Beckett told Motorsport News: "Out of the blue I was asked by MSV whether Heritage would like to join the British GT package for Oulton Park. It's [British GT] in my opinion the best place to race in the UK. Oulton Park's really popular."

Beckett brought the Champion of Brands series back to the calendar in 2010, and in recent seasons has added Snetterton, Cadwell Park and Donington 'Champion of…' meetings.

Beckett also has published expanded calendars for 2021 containing 11 Heritage rounds, including a first visit to Mallory Park, and nine for the Champion of series including one at Silverstone. Three meetings are combined Heritage and Champion of events. Beckett said the increased numbers are to give competitors options of where and when to compete plus include a "buffer" should there be Covid-related cancellations. "It's to give people a chance to race because I still predict that 2021's going to be a difficult year for everybody," Beckett added.

James Beckett has created packed schedules for 2021

GT powerhouse TF will be in unfamiliar LMP2 territory

GT CHAMPION SQUAD TF EXPANDS TO LMP2 WITH ELMS EFFORT

Multiple GT champion team TF Sport will expand into prototype LMP2 racing this year with the newly formed Racing Team Turkey effort in the European Le Mans Series.

TF won last year's Le Mans 24 Hour GTE Am contest with Salih Yoluc, Charlie Eastwood and Jonny Adam at the wheel, and with the same driver trio narrowly missed out on the 2019-20 World Endurance Championship title. The team has bagged several championships across British GT, Blancpain, GT Cup and the Michelin Le Mans Cup.

Turkish racer Yoluc and Eastwood will reconvene in the Racing Team Turkey by TF Sport line-up, and will be joined by 2016 ELMS champion Harry Tincknell.

TF owner Tom Ferrier said: "We are really excited about the challenge. We don't underestimate that it's going to be tough, but it's somewhere we have always wanted to progress to.

"A huge thanks to Salih for making this possible and staying with us. We are very happy to keep Charlie, as both him and Salih are known quantities to us and we're pleased to have Harry too. A driver of Harry's quality and experience will speed up the learning process and bring us some strong results."

GINETTA SUPERCUP RUNNER-UP BURTON GRADUATES TO BRITISH GT

Ginetta GT4 Supercup 2020 runner-up Gus Burton will step up to British GT in 2021 driving a Century Motorsport BMW M4 GT4.

Burton, 18, won five Ginetta Supercup races driving for Century last season in his first year out of Ginetta Junior, and this season he will compete with the same squad in a newly upgraded BMW Motorsport-built machine. Century Motorsport took 2018's British GT4 title in its first year with the BMW, and last year won the season-closing Silverstone 500 GT4 race with Rob Wheldon and Andrew Gordon-Colebrooke driving.

Century owner Nathan Freke is in discussion with several candidates to fill Burton's co-driver seat. The team also confirmed that 21-year-old ex-MG Trophy racer Andy Spencer is its first signing to its 2021 Ginetta Supercup line-up.

Freke said: "He [Burton] has been a joy to work with in the Ginetta Supercup and was unlucky to miss out on the title. His raw talent is amongst the best I've seen and we are relishing the opportunity to put a championship-contending package beneath him. The car will be a force to be reckoned with."

Young Ginetta frontrunner Burton gets step-up

FLACK AND CRESSWELL ARE FRESH RECRUITS FOR BRITISH F4

Karting graduates Marcos Flack and McKenzy Cresswell are the latest to be confirmed to compete in British Formula 4 this season, joining respectively the Argenti Motorsport and JHR Developments teams.

Australian 14-year-old Flack has achieved domestic and international karting success that led to him being invited to a Ferrari Driver Academy camp last October. He also sampled the F4 machine with Argenti towards the end of the 2020 season in official test days at Brands Hatch and Snetterton.

Flack is the first signing of what is intended to be a multi-car 2021 driver line-up for Argenti, which in its debut season last year took Casper Stevenson to third in the table. Argenti boss Michael Meadows said: "There's no doubt Marcos is a serious talent and his performances in testing last year were very impressive."

Cresswell, also 14, was born in the UK and raised in Austin, Texas, and like Flack competed in official test days with his new team towards the end of last year. JHR boss Steven Hunter said: "We were impressed with his performances in karts and he has followed that up by showing pace and maturity when testing the F4 British championship car as well."

Flack has caught Ferrari's eye

Team Parker in Brit quintet

BRITISH GT TEAMS DOMINATE GULF 12 HOURS ENTRY

British GT teams made up six of the 12 cars in last weekend's Gulf 12 Hours with Team Parker Racing and 2 Seas Motorsport joining RAM Racing and Optimum Motorsport.

Team Parker Racing made its debut appearance at the endurance event – which was held at Bahrain's Sakhir venue for the first time rather than the usual Abu Dhabi Yas Marina circuit – with Derek Pierce, Andy Meyrick and Euan McKay in a second-generation Bentley Continental GT3.

While 2 Seas competed with a pair of McLaren 720S GT3s. Bahraini royal Isa bin Abdulla Al Khalifa was joined by Ben Barnicoat and Martin Kodric, and former IndyCar racer Ed Jones paired with Lewis Williamson and Dylan Pereira. Mutiple MotoGP champion Valentino Rossi also took part, in a Kessel Racing Ferrari 488 GT3.

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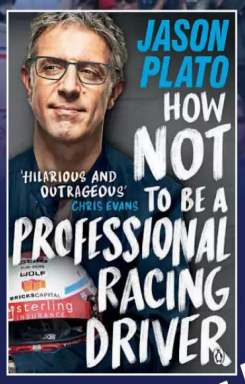

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RACING NEWS

Photo: David Stallard Photography, Jakob Ebrey, Porsche Motorsport

The distinctive Peugeot 309

Parker-Morris: popular

SALOON STALWART PARKER-MORRIS PASSES AWAY

Tributes pour in for Thundersaloons legend who also turned around CSCC's Special Saloons series

By Graham Keilloh

Motorsport News is saddened to report that Ricky Parker-Morris passed away last week at the age of 60 due to Covid and subsequent pneumonia.

Parker-Morris with brother Danny was integral to developing the Classic Sports Car Club's Special Saloons and Modsports series over recent years. As well as being a skilled racer, Parker-Morris also was a committee member and driver representative for the category and did much to encourage participation.

Parker-Morris raced a distinctive Ford Cosworth turbo-powered Peugeot 309, which he also previously raced with distinction in Thundersaloons. The car was built by Parker-Morris with Danny for a feature series in *Fast Car* magazine, for which they were photographer and editor respectively.

Parker-Morris also last year helped build and modify wards specifically for Covid patients in the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Trust, as well as purified water for London's Nightingale Hospital.

CSCC director Hugo Holder told MN: "Ricky was one in a million. He was just a lovely lovely guy. [He was] totally dedicated to racing and Special Saloons and getting the thing going again. Always there willing to help. Always having a laugh which is what it was all about, we were all doing it for fun."

Fellow CSCC director David Smitheram added: "Considering the position that he's in as racer and coordinator, I never heard him fall out with anyone. [He was] fast but fair." The CSCC added that an appropriate tribute to Parker-Morris will be confirmed in the coming weeks. Motorsport News extends its condolences to his family and friends.

Venues get latest red light

BRITISH CIRCUITS ADAPT TO LATEST LOCKDOWN

Motorsport UK has confirmed that permits for events in England and Scotland are now withdrawn after the two countries announced a new period of Covid-19 lockdown on January 4.

The lockdown restrictions in England are expected to last until at least February 15. The governing body added it is awaiting further information regarding the status of Wales, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands.

MotorSport Vision, which operates Brands Hatch, Donington Park, Snetterton, Oulton Park and Cadwell Park, confirmed that general testing, trackdays, driving experiences and non-elite motorsport activity will not take place at its circuits before mid-February, though exclusive and semi-exclusive testing involving professional race teams will continue.

Anglesey circuit told MN that it also remains potentially open for exclusive testing for professional teams who would qualify as elite operations. The British Automobile Racing Club, which operates Thruxton, Croft and Pembrey, confirmed that its three circuits are closed in line with government restrictions, though their 2021 schedules of race events and driving experiences are unaffected. All Castle Combe circuit activity up to and including February 15 has ceased.

UK CLIO CUP CHAMPIONSHIP OFF IN '21

There will be no Clio Cup championship in the UK in 2021 due to ongoing Covid-related difficulties.

The category ran on the British Touring Car Championship's support package for several years, until Renault UK withdrew its support after the 2019 season. Renault Sport Racing then announced it would back a 2020 UK championship, to be on British GT's undercard using the new fifth-generation Clio.

The championship's debut was however subsequently postponed to 2021, with the explanation that more time was required to test the new car amid Covid's disruption. RSR has now confirmed that there will be no UK contest this season either, again due to Covid's "uncertainties". RSR has however not ruled out reviving the championship in future.

No Clio Cup in the UK this season

In latest lockdown Porsche Carrera Cup GB goes virtual

INAUGURAL VIRTUAL PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB CONTEST GETS UNDERWAY

The Porsche Esports Carrera Cup GB held its inaugural rounds last Sunday with two races at a virtual Silverstone.

Porsche Motorsport GB's official Esports competition, utilising the iRacing platform, has a £14,000 prize pot with £7000 for the championship winner.

There will be two 25-minute races each Sunday up to March 7, aside from the Le Mans round that has one 45-minute race. Fans can follow the races live via Porsche's Twitch channel.

Some 385 hopefuls, including some of the world's best sim racers, entered December pre-qualification, and the 26 fastest plus two guests make up the opening rounds' grids. The 2014 Carrera Cup GB champion Josh Webster and 2020 race-winner Will Martin are among the participants.

"Porsche has been at the forefront of the Esports movement for a number of years and has always recognised Esports as its own, highly competitive branch of motorsport," said Porsche motorsport manager James MacNaughton.

IN BRIEF

Combe dates

Castle Combe circuit and racing club have announced their 2021 car racing calendar. The eight-meeting schedule starts with its traditional opener, the Easter Monday Howard's Day event on April 5. That features the full array of Combe racing categories plus HRDC contests rearranged from last October's rain-hit Autumn Classic historic meeting. Tickets for all meetings are on sale now.

Star of Mallory

The British Racing and Sports Car Club is bringing back the Star of Mallory to Formula Ford 1600 this year as part of it Northern & Super Classic FF1600 championship. It will be decided across four Mallory visits on the Northern calendar, and the contest has a £2000 prize pot.

CSCC'S KNOCKHILL INCENTIVES

The Classic Sports Car Club is providing incentives for members to travel to its first-ever Knockhill meeting this May, including helping entrants turn it into an extended holiday.

The meeting, on the bank holiday May 1-2 weekend, will use Knockhill's regular layout for its Saturday race then the reversed layout for Sunday's race two.

Saturday evening dinner is included within the entry fee plus the circuit has given permission for members to leave their trailers and race cars at the track over the following week, so they can turn their Scotland stop-off into an longer break.

NO OVERSEAS DRIVERS IN NEW ZEALAND'S TOYOTA RACING SERIES

Overseas drivers will not be permitted to compete in this year's New Zealand-based Toyota Racing Series due to it losing approval to use the country's managed isolation facilities for arrivals.

The contest in recent years has been a popular winter contest for up-and-coming European-based single-seater racers, with Lando Norris winning the title in 2016 and Lance Stroll in '15, while AlphaTauri Formula 1 recruit Yuki Tsunoda took part last season.

Andrew Davis, Toyota New Zealand's general manager of motorsport, said: "We had several international drivers lined up and ready to come, so we are disappointed that this is the end result, especially as we had worked hard to gain approved status. We have seen many of the TRS drivers go on to compete in Formula 1 and we had done everything in our power to ensure this continued this season.

"However, we are excited for the series and it will definitely be one to watch this year with a lot of great up-and-coming Kiwi talent competing and a significant list of established Kiwi racers bolstering the field."

Advertising enquiries: 01233 228753

Photos:mcklein-imagedatabase.com, FIA ERC

Siebel: Sad UK is absent

WRC BOSSES KEEN TO SAY UK RETURN

WRC Promoter managing director Jona Siebel and FIA rally director Yves Matton are keen for the UK to return to the WRC, with Siebel confirming the door remains open for the event happening in 2022.

"It's sad the WRC will not enjoy the beauty of Northern Ireland this year, but the pandemic continues to impact the global economy," Siebel said. "Our enthusiasm for a WRC round there remains strong and we look forward to continuing our discussions for 2022." Matton added: "Bobby Willis [Rally Northern Ireland promoter] and his team have put in a lot of work and efforts to bring the WRC to Northern Ireland and we're very disappointed there will be no rally in the UK this year."

But while the FIA and WRC Promoter expressed support for Rally Northern Ireland, a statement by Motorsport UK CEO Hugh Chambers cited a "close dialogue with the Welsh Government" but made no Northern Ireland reference.

That stance is understood to be down to the governing body harbouring hopes of reviving the Welsh Government's interest in backing Rally GB following the 2020 event's Covid-related cancellation.

Chambers said: "Against the economic backdrop of Covid-19, it is unfortunate that the requisite funding could not be agreed to secure the UK's position within the 2021 calendar. Motorsport UK is working to secure sustainable funding for the event's early return to the WRC calendar. Those efforts include maintaining a close dialogue with the Welsh Government and other regions in order that UK fans can enjoy the spectacle of the WRC at the earliest opportunity.

Ireland hosted the WRC in 2007 and '09

RALLY NI IS CRUCIAL FOR UK MOTORSPORT SAYS MP IAN PAISLEY

Politician says fans have key role to create momentum for 2022 WRC event

Paisley is a big Rally NI supporter

By Graham Lister

Northern Irish politician Ian Paisley MP is calling on the motorsport community to do all it can to maintain a UK round of the World Rally Championship.

Speaking to Motorsport News following last Friday's confirmation that the Ypres Rally in Belgium will replace Rally Northern Ireland on the 2021 calendar, Paisley said a home WRC event is "absolutely crucial for motorsport development in the UK".

The Democratic Unionist MP for North Antrim is one of the main driving forces behind Rally Northern Ireland and has lobbied for support during parliamentary sessions in Westminster.

Although Rally Northern Ireland appeared on the provisional 2021 WRC roster for August 19-22 as Rally UK, it was subject to the signing of the event promoter agreement.

When it became clear hoped-for funds from Tourism Northern Ireland would not be forthcoming due to the worsening Covid-19 pandemic, time was called on the 2021 event. But Paisley believes it's an opportunity for future years worth fighting for.

Paisley told MN: "It will attract interest, it will attract visitors and maintaining a UK round is absolutely crucial for the future of motorsport development in the UK.

"And events like this also create enthusiasm amongst young people who end up doing technical exams, getting into the sport, not just as participants but as engineers and as people who can really make a difference to the world. The spin-off is absolutely huge."

Paisley believes fans can play their part in getting Rally Northern Ireland over the line as a WRC event.

He said: "People need to really get behind it [because] the British Isles really deserves this. We need that belief coming right from the very top of government, right from the very top of all those engaged in putting on motorsport events in the UK. We need to create that bandwagon effect that it has to happen.

"If you get the will you then establish the way and the way is obviously making sure it's properly resourced. That will be a cocktail of funding from both private and national government as well as the devolved regions pooling up the necessary resources.

"I'm not under any illusions that it won't be tough," Paisley continued. "It is a big ask but any examination of [the event] is that it's worth doing because the opportunity for promoting the region, promoting the United Kingdom and the opportunity for presenting one of the finest spectacles in rallying is all there. But the extra time gives us that space to generate the momentum."

Paisley praised the Rally Northern Ireland organising team, led by Bobby Willis, for looking at 2022 rather than giving up on their dream.

"We have to keep the faith for the industry, for the fans and the competitors," said Paisley. "There's an awful lot of commitment out there and a huge motoring heritage. We want to pull off one of the best WRC Tarmac events that's possible and I certainly do believe it's possible.

"The realistic thing, which the organisers have done, is look at the 2022 calendar and say, 'let's give ourselves the chance to make sure this thing happens really, really well' and establishes Northern Ireland on the World Rally calendar."

Q&A: BOBBY WILLIS, RALLY NI ORGANISER

Why isn't Rally Northern Ireland happening in 2021?

"The main issue is the ongoing risk posed by Covid-19. Tourism Northern Ireland recognise that hosting Rally Northern Ireland in 2021 represented a positive opportunity to profile the region globally, and that it would celebrate Northern Ireland's motor sporting heritage. However, they feel Covid-19 could diminish the substantial economic benefits WRC historically bestows upon its host. Therefore, their investment in the event would not represent the best value for public money at this time."

How hard was that to accept?

"We must accept the situation. We are not the only event to be defeated by the pandemic and I doubt we will be the last. While it is a devastating blow to our 2021 ambitions, we also need to put into perspective that the world is going through the toughest of tough times."

What are chances of an event happening in 2022?

"I have worked for the last seven years to get this far, including many sleepless nights, so I'm not giving up. Discussions are underway for a Northern Irish WRC round in 2022 and I firmly believe we have support from Tourism Northern Ireland, WRC Promoter, the FIA and the teams for that to happen. But our first steps must be to find a way to fund the event so it is not so dependent on the public purse."

Why are you so determined not to give up?

"Rallying in Northern Ireland and throughout the British Isles needs this event to happen. So many people, such as preparation companies and suppliers, have been left with nothing due to Covid-19. They and the whole industry need a big event to believe in and to bring us back to the busy times. You don't get bigger than the WRC. We owe it to them, to all the volunteers that make this sport happen, not to throw in the towel."

Do you have a message to the people, many of whom are volunteers, who have been working with you and supporting you on this bid?

"I am incredibly grateful to motorsport friends who have pledged significant funds and the motorsport community for their outstanding support. I am also immensely appreciative to our local authority partners who have been hugely supportive and enthusiastic throughout. A number of other key individuals and stakeholders across Northern Ireland have also contributed very positively to the planning and I would like to extend a massive thank you to them."

Willis (centre) refuses to let the Rally NI dream die out

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Photos: M-Sport, Hyundai Motorsport

M-Sport boss is pleased with the team's 2021 line-up

Suninen has a part programme this year

MILLENER: OUR YOUNGER LINE-UP CAN HELP M-SPORT MOVE FORWARDS IN THE FUTURE

Youngsters Gus Greensmith, Teemu Suninen and Adrien Fourmaux for British Ford squad this season

By Graham Lister

M-Sport team principal Richard Millener has defended the team's youthful World Rally Championship driver line-up for 2021, telling Motorsport News that it meant the difference between competing or sitting out the upcoming season.

Briton Gus Greensmith will contest the full schedule in a Ford Fiesta WRC, but the 24-year-old has made only nine starts in a World Rally Car and described his 2020 season at the top level as "pretty disastrous" when speaking to MN.

His team-mates Adrien Fourmaux and Teemu Suninen, who will share a second Fiesta, are 25 and 26 respectively. Although Suninen has scored WRC podiums and stage wins, Frenchman Fourmaux, a frontrunner in WRC 2, has yet to compete at the sport's highest tier.

While Millener concedes the team had no option other than to recruit younger, partly-funded drivers due to the financial impact of Covid-19 , he's adamant that M-Sport should not be discounted.

"It's very easy to look from the outside and expect us to come up with a championship-winning driver like we have many times in the past, but we're not in a position to do that," Millener told MN. "We've had to make 75 people redundant in the last 10 months. We have to sell cars in order to be [in the WRC] and car sales were massively hurt last year. We have 120 people employed at M-Sport in the UK. Putting it bluntly, do you employ a driver that would cost the same amount as all their wages combined or do you keep 120 people employed? It's not a question we asked ourselves.

"We don't have any budget to pay a driver, but we don't feel like the three we have chosen are reserves or anything like that," Millener continued. "We want to work with them and help them as much as we can because we believe in them. We're very happy with what we've managed to do considering all the business constraints we've been under and it's great to be able to put out a two-car team in the WRC. If I was to speak as a fan, it's what any fan would want to see."

As well as working to increase Suninen's programme, Millner is hopeful of fielding additional World Rally Cars on selected events later in the season: "There are some interesting events and it may be that we can find a way to get some other people in," he said.

Millener admitted however that sitting out 2021 was a possibility but it would never have got M-Sport boss Malcolm Wilson's approval. "It's a very simple way to cut a lot of budget and concentrate on just selling customer cars. But Malcolm loves the WRC and it brings a lot to the company. It would have been the easy way out but none of us wanted that option so we were always going to try to find a way to be here and again we've done it."

M-Sport sent Fourmaux to ERC twice during 2020

GREENSMITH SET FOR ERC OUTINGS FOR EXTRA SEAT TIME

Gus Greensmith is set to contest the opening two rounds of the European Rally Championship in a bid to keep match fit between WRC rounds, Motorsport News has learned.

The WRC version of the Arctic Lapland Rally is due to get the green light in the coming days for February 25-28. However, Rally Croatia is scheduled for April 22-25, leaving Greensmith with time to fill.

"We're looking to get around the gap in the calendar and help him develop and move forward," M-Sport team principal Rich Millener told MN. "And we're looking at maybe trying to send Adrien [Fourmaux] as well and we'll also try to get some of our customers there."

Millener expects Greensmith to show more consistency in 2021 and believes his season-long campaign and test programme will lead to a form hike. That test programme will start with two days in France ahead of the Monte-Carlo Rally to allow Greensmith to sample the new-for-2021 Pirelli tyres.

"Finishing events is key for Gus," Millener said. "There's been a few events where he's done really well and then had some unfortunate accidents. Trying to eliminate the small silly things comes from maybe not having so much time in the car.

"He knows what he needs to do and we won't put so much pressure on him to do that because we've always set his targets and goals we feel are realistic. We feel he has proved himself, he's capable of doing good times and stage results. This is his opportunity to prove that he is a potential for 2022 and beyond."

Monte is under threat

WRC OPENER IN MONTE-CARLO STILL SET TO RUN

As Motorsport News went to press, Rallye Monte-Carlo – the first round of the 2021 WRC – was still on from January 21-24 despite measures restricting entry to France from the UK causing real concern.

A further complication arose last Friday morning when the UK government mandated the need for those travelling to the country – including UK nationals – to be tested for Covid-19 no earlier than 72 hours before their arrival.

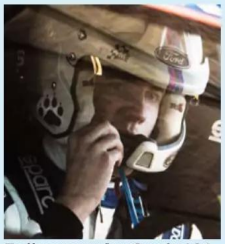
That would essentially require those returning to the UK from the Monte-Carlo Rally to be tested during the event and would therefore need remote testing centres to be established at short notice in either Gap or Monaco, a process that can be both complex and costly.

Q&A: GUS GREENSMITH

A full WRC programme with M-Sport. Are you ready?
"I've been ready since I started dreaming of it. Obviously it's a lot of responsibility and people take a lot of pride in British motorsport teams. For that there is a small weight on my shoulders to carry but for the opportunity it gives you... dealing with expectations efficiently and well is just part of the job."

As well as responsibility, is there pressure?
"I don't feel pressure. To be honest I've never really given much thought to what people have to say or think. For me it's important that the people who need to know, know. It's important I focus on impressing them rather than listening to what anyone else has to say. It's just going to be a year only about rallying and not very much else but this is what I've worked so hard for and I've got to give it 100%."

What would represent a satisfactory season?
"That's something I will keep in my head. I have my targets given to me but I'm not interested in sharing them because as soon as you do that everyone is going to be judging you. It's just for me to know and for me to focus on."



Full season for Gus in '21

BRITISH RX HEADS TO SPA FRANCORCHAMPS IN 2021

Six rounds across five different nations in store for rallycross battlers this year

PROVISIONAL CALENDAR

5 Nations BRX 2021

DATE	VENUE	LOCATION
May 29-31	Lydden Hill	Kent, England
Jul 10-11	Mondello Park	County Kildare, Ireland
Aug 29-30	Pembrey	Carmarthenshire, Wales
Sep 25-26	Knockhill	Fife, Scotland
Nov 6-7	Lydden Hill	Kent, England
Dec 4-5	Spa Francorchamps	Stavelot, Belgium

By Hal Ridge

The British Rallycross Championship 5 Nations Trophy will run a six-event calendar this year, including a finale on the Spa-Francorchamps layout in Belgium.

BRX organisers were forced to scrap plans to run at a range of venues both on the UK mainland and abroad last year due to the coronavirus pandemic, with the three rounds that did take place all held at Lydden Hill.

Series bosses are now intending to revisit plans for the 5 Nations structure, with a calendar that features rounds at Lydden Hill (England), Pembrey (Wales), Knockhill (Scotland), Mondello Park (Ireland) and Spa (Belgium). The headline British Rallycross Championship Supercar class will run over seven rounds, with one of the six events to operate as a double-header.

The series will begin later than usual, with the opening event held at Lydden Hill in late May on the month's second Bank Holiday weekend in a bid to avoid Covid-19 related restrictions.

That means for the second year in a row, British Championship rallycross won't take place on its traditional Easter Bank Holiday weekend. In a further significant shift to the traditional schedule, Lydden Hill will not host the August Bank Holiday event either with that honour falling to Pembrey in Wales.

The penultimate round, also at Lydden, will run into the dark following the successful event held in December, which was partially held under floodlights. The final round at Spa will be the first time the British series has raced at the Belgian Formula 1 venue – the rallycross layout was introduced to the World Rallycross Championship in 2019 – although British RX has previously held rounds at Maasmechelen, and over the Dutch border at Valkenswaard in the last decade.

Further details about which rounds the other classes on the 5 Nations BRX roster will run at are expected in due course.

Photos: 5 Nations British Rallycross Championship, Honza Fronek, Andros Trophy, Icechallenge.it

British Rallycross field will get the chance to tackle the highly-regarded Spa layout

Williams battled Monte-like conditions on Rally Monza

WILLIAMS EAGER FOR RALLY2 MOMENTUM WITH MONTE ENTRY

Tom Williams has entered next week's Rallye Monte-Carlo in the WRC 3 class and is looking forward to carrying on the momentum he built after December's Rally Monza.

Williams contested Monza alongside co-driver Giorgia Ascalone on just his third start in a Rally2 car, in conditions that were representative of a traditional Monte. The 22-year-old was thankful for the conditions as he said it has boosted his experience.

He told MN: "I really didn't think I would be doing any rallying for a while but we're now motivated and focused on trying to pull everything together for the start of Monte-Carlo.

"There is no off-season which is good because we want to carry on the momentum. Everybody said Monza was actually harder than Monte because at least [with] Monte-Carlo you know what you're going into: you've got ice crew, studded tyres. The only way for me to learn this legendary event is by doing it. If we can gain this mileage and bring the seconds per kilometre [to the leaders] down we will be happy."

Williams, who will progress from a Ford Fiesta R5 to the latest Rally2 model, has registered for WRC 3 but isn't sure on the formation of his 2021 season. "We'll see how the rest of the year unfolds. We can't say anything else because I don't think anybody knows. We have to wait to see how the world develops."

J-B DUBOURG AND PANIS SHARE THE SPOILS AT ISOLA

Multiple Andros Trophy champion Jean-Baptiste Dubourg and Formula 1 race-winner Olivier Panis claimed a win apiece in the third and fourth rounds of the ice racing series at Isola 2000.

Dubourg's first win of the campaign, aboard DA Racing's Renault-supported ZOE, came as part of a double-podium success for the rallycross squad, with team-mate Nicolas Prost finishing third. The pair sandwiched Sebastien Loeb Racing driver Jeremy Sarhy on the rostrum.

Panis, meanwhile, finished 13th and last in the top-flight Elite Pro division on Friday evening, before claiming victory on Saturday, ahead of fellow ex-F1 racer Franck Lagorce who had set the fastest time in Q2 with Sarhy third. Despite finishing only eighth on the second day, four-time Andros title-holder Dubourg leads the standings by two points over reigning champion Aurelien Panis.

Pussier Competition driver Sylvian Pussier claimed the Elite class win on Friday, before Gerald Fontanel took a second win of the weekend for the DA Racing team on Saturday, piloting the car he shares with Dubourg. The result lifted Fontanel to the top of the Elite standings by 10 points.

Dubourg leads series

Civic back to former glory

HIGGINS COMPLETES CIVIC LOCKDOWN PROJECT

Three-time British Rally champion Mark Higgins has completed the restoration of his Honda Civic VTi that he used to claim the junior UK title in 1994.

Higgins took sixth in the overall championship.

"Lockdown has had one positive," Higgins wrote on his Facebook page. "This little car helped me get my works drive with Nissan [in 1996] and was a fantastic, reliable car.

"A big thanks to Richard at Asquith Autosport who had us out in the car whenever possible and our small budget allowed.

"Also thanks to Simon Brown for all his help with the build, Richard Lewis for the great paintwork and Wayne Ellis for the period decals.

"Hopefully I will get her out for a spin one day."

Craig Breen was in action during the opening weekend of The Ice Challenge, Italy's answer to the French Andros Trophy last weekend. The Irishman was eligible for the Side By Side class and won it, scoring fifth overall as well as a qualifying win on the second morning.

Advertising enquiries: 01233 228753

RALLY NEWS

Photos: RallySport Media, Chicane Media, Jakob Ebrey, SMJ Photography

A decision on Rallynuts' 2021 future is imminent

Malcolm Wilson event might run later in the year

BTRDA SEASON FACING DELAYED START WITH RALLY CANCELLATIONS

Rallynuts Stages could follow Malcolm Wilson Rally in falling by the wayside

By Luke Barry

The planned opening to the 2021 BTRDA Rally Series season is looking under threat, with the Malcolm Wilson Rally already cancelled and the Rallynuts Stages on the brink of the same fate.

Malcolm Wilson organisers announced that the season-opening March 13 event wouldn't be running on its intended date after MN went to press last week. Clerk of the course Kevin Savage subsequently told MN the cancellation was a "done deal" as soon as the national lockdown was confirmed by the UK Government on January 4.

"Now we can't move with Covid we wouldn't be able to do recces, we couldn't get roadbooks and all the rest of it so that was just the final straw really, the lockdown," Savage said. "It's never easy cancelling an event, but I think it was a done deal as soon as Boris Johnson locked us down. We didn't have an option."

The Malcolm Wilson was already compromised for 2021 before the new strain of coronavirus as the event couldn't utilise Forestry England land like it normally would due to a suspension of motorsport activity until at least April – a result of a wider review. Savage confirmed to MN the rally would have therefore been a mixed-surface affair with stages in Greystoke forest and RNAD Broughton Moor (a Royal Navy ammunitions dump) had it run, but the organisers have not ruled out rescheduling the event later in the year.

Rallynuts organisers, meanwhile, have also been working on a plan B for the April 17 rally, designing what joint clerk of the course Keith Ashley described as "an expanded single-venue" route to minimise contact with residents and the general public. But those efforts may prove to be in vain too, with an organisers' meeting being held on January 13 after MN went to press set to decide the rally's future in 2021.

Speaking before that meeting, Ashley told MN: "The developments of this year so far aren't making it any easier that's for sure. We're effectively waiting for two governments to make decisions and that makes life pretty much outside of your control, all you can do is second guess but the longer it goes, the more difficult it is for us. I don't wish to be negative, it's just that we've got to be realistic. It's a game of snakes and ladders: you hope you go up more ladders than you come down snakes."

If the Rallynuts is cancelled it would, for the time being, leave a potential six-round BTRDA calendar beginning on May 22 with the Plains Rally and concluding on October 30 with the Cambrian Rally.

CAVE: RALLYING IN EUROPE IS WHAT I WANT TO BE DOING

British Rally Championship regular Tom Cave has admitted the European Rally Championship is his aim for 2021 but says he would have to raise much more funding to make it happen.

Cave has plenty of international experience but has not ever put a full continental programme together in an R5 car. He confessed that raising the necessary funding will be difficult amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Deep down I want to be competing in Europe and especially the ERC," Cave told Motorsport News. "It's got a great presence now and the coverage is excellent and that's where I want to be. The only reason we haven't [been there] is we haven't had the budget to do it.

"If we had the budget to do it we'd have been doing it the last few seasons. It's just very difficult to get there, and I think it'll be even harder now with what's going on."

Cave's most likely destination for 2021 is the BRC – a title the 29-year-old is yet to secure. However the 2019 runner-up thinks the new calendar is well thought out.

"It's got a good balance between asphalt and gravel events," he said. "It's nice to see the return of some events like the Jim Clark and the Trackrod Rally in Yorkshire, I think that's a nice addition.

"I think it'll be a great year but there's a lot of uncertainty at the moment with what's going on."

Cave fancies the ERC

FIESTA R2T SWITCH A "NO BRAINER" FOR TINDALL

BTRDA Rallye R2 Cup contender Ewan Tindall has traded his Ford Fiesta R2 in for a Fiesta R2T and hopes the new machine will bring him closer to his rivals.

The R2T was acquired from Peter Jackson and has since been painted blue with yellow powder-coated wheels, inspired by the Volkswagen Golf IV Kit Car driven by Mark Higgins and Tapio Laukkanen 20 years ago.

"We kind of felt we were on the back foot so we had the chance to get rid of the car, it was pretty much a no brainer to be honest," Tindall told MN. "Obviously going from a normally-aspirated car to a turbo car is just so much different. It's got so much pull, you're up and down the box so much quicker. First impressions are much better, it feels like a good step up."

Tindall will once again make use of £5000 towards entry fees in 2021 courtesy of winning the 2300 Club John Easson Award in 2019. There was no winner last year with so little rallying.

"It's a big help, it's one less worry," Tindall added. "I'm really thankful, it makes such a big difference."

Tindall is pleased with his new Fiesta which has been painted to resemble F2 Golf

MNCRC bosses still want eight rounds despite new setback

MNCRC STILL PLANNING EIGHT ROUNDS DESPITE TEMPORARY HALT

The 2020-21 Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship has been brought to a temporary halt but organisers still intend to run a full eight-round season.

Championship co-ordinator Darren Spann told MN last week before the England and Scotland lockdown was announced that "everything's looking good" for rounds two and three at Cadwell and Oulton Park, but the governmental decision to increase restrictions has now forced both of those events to be postponed.

The theoretical next round is the Snetterton Stages on February 20 but it could yet still fall. Only the Dukeries Rally – won by Frank Bird – at Donington Park has run.

"We are currently working with Motorsport UK, MotorSport Vision and all organising clubs to explore all avenues to ensure the championship resumes," said a series statement. "We are working through a revised calendar of events to ensure all eight rounds of the championship can take place which we will announce in due course."

HISTORICS

DOWN THE WORKSHOP

PAUL WALLIS

Alfa Historic Touring Car racer
Age: 68 **Lives:** Telford

Wallis returned after a break

He's always raced Alfas
"I started racing back in the 1980s with an Alfa Giulia. I've always raced Alfas and I've never raced anything else. I started in Historic Touring Cars and did a couple of Coys Festivals at Silverstone and I raced at Spa three or four times. In about 2003 someone made me an offer on the car I couldn't refuse, so I ended up selling it."

He had a long break from racing
"I had the intention of building another car but other priorities took over. I finally decided to get back into it all these years later and went along to a few races. I had a Giulia in the garage that I was going to restore as a road car. I had a lot of the parts and I could do most of the preparation myself and so that's how it came to be."

It's a learning process
"I got back into racing last season and have been learning all the circuits again. I'd been out of racing for 17 years. It was a bit of a learning curve again, but I really enjoyed it. I knew the car could be competitive and I thought if I could get myself into gear we might be competitive again – time will tell, but I'm a lot older now!"

Alfas are still rare
"When I first started, not so many people were racing Alfas and for the guys with the Minis and Lotus Cortinas you can buy everything off the shelf and it has all been developed over the years. But with Alfas, we've had to find a lot of our own stuff and develop things for ourselves."

Jim Evans helped
"Jim Evans helped me in the early days. He's a brilliant engineer and approached me in the 1990s and had a look round the car. He took the car back to Yorkshire and did some development and testing and we got it from the back part of the midfield to nearer the front. I had an outright win at Mallory Park with Jim helping."

He's an Alfa fan
"Everybody has got this thing that Alfas used to be unreliable and used to go rusty, but they are no worse than any other car now. The engineering, in the 1960s, was five-speed gearbox, disc brakes all round and aluminium diffs. Alfas were so far ahead in the engineering department."

Photos: Paul Lawrence

Classic rally cars will now run in October

RALLY REVIVAL REVERTS TO BACK-UP DATE AMID GLOBAL HEALTH CRISIS

Organisers hope that the 90 entrants will remain loyal to the event

By Paul Lawrence

The organisers of the second Rally Revival, planned for February 26-27 from a base in Wrexham, have moved the event to October due to the ongoing global health pandemic.

Following the announcement of the latest Covid-19 lockdown, Bryn Pierce and his team acted quickly to confirm that the special stage demonstration event will move to its reserve date of October 16-17.

The event, which celebrated Colin McRae in 2020, was due to run with a superb field of 90 period rally cars and a set of venues including Oulton Park and Weston Park. It is hoped that most entrants will move their entry to the new date.

Pierce said: "In light of the new six-week lockdown for England we feel the best course of action for the good of motorsport, and in fairness to all of the participants who are joining us, is to postpone the event to our back-up date. That date is based around the government advice that under 50s will only see vaccines around late summer time, so the October date gives us all a huge opportunity to make something really special."

Pierce alluded to the option of timed competition in October for some participants as well as at least one extra venue. "The thing that really brings the atmosphere is the fans, both on the side of the public roads and at the test venues. This is something we class as key to what Revival is about."

Gathercole aims for more rally outings after Donington run

Lorraine Gathercole hopes to contest future rounds of the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship in her historic specification Ford Escort Mk1.

On her first rally since the 2019 Roger Albert Clark Rally Gathercole, who is chair of the Motorsport UK historic committee, made her rally debut at Donington Park in December having raced there many times.

"It was very slippery and very alien with all the cones and tyres on the first part of the stage," said Gathercole, whose only other competitive event of last year was the Historic Sports Car Club's Thundersports races at Brands Hatch in July in her Lola T212. "Then you came out onto the circuit and it was all very familiar, apart from a few chicanes!"

There will be a series of races to feature cars like the Jag E-type

LONG DISTANCE HISTORIC SERIES TO EXPAND IN 2021

Motor Racing Legends has further extended its 2021 plans by adding a second Pre '66 Three-Hour Race to its schedule.

The race line up for the Donington Historic Festival on May 1-2 will feature a three-hour endurance race in the style of the race held at Silverstone in late October.

To be called the Royal Automobile Club Pall Mall Cup, three-hour races will now be run at Donington and at Silverstone on October 30-31. The races will be for pre-'61 sports-racing cars, pre-'63 GT cars and pre-'66 GTS and Touring Cars.

"Following the success of our Three-Hour race in October we are delighted to announce a new series of races," said MRL boss Duncan Wiltshire.

Hero Monte Carlo-winning co-driver Morley passes away

Val Morley, who died on Christmas Eve last year aged 88, was one of the Britain's leading co-drivers of the post-war era.

Born Valerie Domleo, she did her first event co-driving for a boyfriend and was soon competing on the toughest events of the era and enjoying great success alongside drivers like Rosemary Smith, Pat Moss and Anne Hall.

She was a leading contender in the European Rally Championship in the early 1960s and won the ladies award on the 1961 Monte-Carlo Rally with Hall. She was also a match for the best male co-drivers of the day and partnered Smith to overall victory on the 1965 Tulip Rally from the works Hillman Imp team.

In 1966 she married works Austin Healey driver Donald Morley and retired from rallying to start a family and concentrate on the family farming interests in Suffolk.

IN BRIEF

Naylor in charge
John Naylor has been appointed as chair of the FIA's Historic Motor Sport Commission. Naylor, who is already president of Ireland's governing body, Motorsport Ireland, has taken over from Paulo Cantarella who held the post for six years but was obliged to stand down when he reached the age of 75, in line with FIA rules.

Clee Hill is lost
The Clee Hill Trial, scheduled for January 24, is another casualty of the lockdown. The Midland Automobile Club's classic trial in the Shropshire hills had already attracted a capacity 90-car entry when the organisers were obliged to pull the plug. It is hoped that the trial will return in January 2022.

GT and Sports Car tour
The four-event calendar for the GT and Sports Car Cup will take in two UK races in 2021, starting at the Historic Sports Car Club's Silverstone meeting on May 22-23. The series will also return to the Castle Combe Autumn Classic (October 2) and take in races at the Nurburgring Oldtimer GP (August 13-15) and the Algarve Classic Festival (October 29-31).

Balchin for Formula 3
Sometime Chevron B19 racer Bruce Balchin will switch focus to Classic Formula 3 this season in a March 743. The 1974 two-litre car spent four seasons in the British F3 Championship before moving into 750MC Formula 4. Balchin hopes to have the car ready for the new season.

McRae Sr steps back
Jimmy McRae is the latest star name to be confirmed for the Deja Vu Ireland West celebration event on May 21-22. McRae will join more than 60 others on the 130-mile route through the mountains of Mayo and Galway on roads used on the Circuit of Ireland and Galway rallies. In period, McRae won the Circuit of Ireland seven times and the Galway International twice.

Per Ardua delayed
Due to the latest lockdown, the team at HERO-ERA has postponed the Per Ardua As Infinitum classic rally planned for the Taunton area in early February. The event has been pushed back to March 5-6 when a similar route in planned in Somerset and Devon, starting from Taunton on Friday afternoon.

New Pomeroy date
Although it has been forced to postpone the Pomeroy Trophy due to run in mid-February at Silverstone, the VSCC is hoping to be able to rearrange the event for later in the year. The club expects that the dates of some of its winter season of trials will be impacted by the lockdown too.

HRDC out to play
The 2021 programme for the Historic Racing Drivers' Club is due to start at Castle Combe on Easter Monday with the races lost to the flooding at last October's Autumn Classic. HRDC races then feature prominently at the Donington Historic Festival (May), the Thruxton Historic (June) and at Lydden Hill on July 4.

Advertising enquiries: 01233 228753

FEATURE

OLIVER GAVIN

THE CHEVY GT KING

The multiple champion reflects on a highly decorated sportscar career at the heart of a GT attack. By Matt James

Gavin rose to become one of the UK's biggest American hits

Five wins at Le Mans is a pretty special achievement, but to complete them all with one manufacturer is something hard to accomplish. But then, Oliver Gavin's CV has a raft of pretty special achievements.

The Bedfordshire racer has five American sportscar titles to his name too, and five wins in the Sebring 12 hours to boot. You can throw in an epic victory at Daytona in 2016 too. There are very few British racers who have a trophy cabinet quite like Gavin.

The six-foot-two-inch tall racer crammed his frame into single-seaters in the 1990s, and raced his way to the cusp of a grand prix career before the doors slammed shut. He decided to go and seek his fortune in the land of opportunity in the USA. It paid off handsomely and Gavin has spent almost two decades as a mainstay of Chevrolet's GT programmes.

He announced recently that he was stepping aside from the Chevrolet factory team to concentrate on other future activities. It brings the curtain down on a hugely rewarding partnership for the 48-year-old driver and the grand old American marque. He spent some of his new-found spare time tackling the MN readers' questions

Question: Was there motor racing in your family? Where did the interest come from?
John Charles
Via email

Oliver Gavin: "My brother Marcus and I started karting when I was 11 years old and he was 13. My father is an engineer and my grandfather owned and ran two garages in the local town in Bedford. My grandfather was a bit of a whiz with road cars in the 1950s and 1960s – back in those days, they used to go wrong a lot and he had a magic touch with fixing them. I suppose my interest in cars started there.

"My father was looking for an activity to do with my brother and I and we were living in the same village as James Rhodes [an active karter at the time who progressed through to Formula Renault]. His father was actually our family doctor. Dr Rhodes suggested to my dad that he brought us along to karting at Rye House and that was it. We were hooked and we loved it. In the car on the way home, my dad said we could buy a kart which we could use between us. We just ran that to see how we would get on. For the first six months or so, we just popped it onto the roof rack of the car and went wherever we could to drive it: car parks, big open spaces, anywhere. We didn't even wear crash helmets. Sometimes we even went to a race track. It was nuts: no health and safety! We got the bug, then dad bought a van, then another kart, and it went from there. I had a brilliant childhood, travelling all around the UK, racing in some great places and some not-so-great places. My brother went on to do some saloon racing, but he was even taller than me and his size was an issue. He ended up doing some two-driver races in a VW Golf GTi, but I never shared with him. By that stage I was in single-seaters and the laser focus of that seems to be all-consuming."

MN: Were there any motorsport heroes that you had then when you were making your way into the sport?

OG: "Yes – Gilles Villeneuve."

MN: That's the correct answer…

OG: "He triggered my real interest in motorsport. I remember him being killed, I was heartbroken. I had just started getting into watching Formula 1. My dad was an avid Villeneuve fan too and we watched him in every race. I was a Ferrari fan too. I remember going to the British Grand Prix at Silverstone in 1983 – we went on qualifying day – and I had all my Ferrari gear: hat, shirt, flag. I was a proper fan boy. But it was a year too late to see Gilles."

MN sets the scene: Although it was five years old and going strong, Formula First, the 1600cc Ford-powered entry-level category devised by John Webb at Brands Hatch, didn't feature the prettiest of cars. Their transversely mounted engines made the single-seaters somewhat hair-raising to drive. Gavin, though, clicked with the cars and hit the ground running on his

Photos: Motorsport Images, Gary Hawkins

Success in 1995 British F3 came with Edenbridge

step to car racing in 1991 with Fortec.

Question: Did Formula First actually teach a young driver anything?

James Hilton
Via email

OG: "It taught me how to drive a car with a boat anchor hanging out the back! That thing had a *particular* driving style. I suppose it is quite similar to driving a Porsche 911, that sort of thing. Whether it was the engine, the gearbox, the [treaded] tyre, the weight distribution…it was a very unique single-seater, but it did generate some fantastic racing. It was some of the best, despite the fact the cars were absolute bricks. You could get such a massive tow in them. It was a lot of fun. You always look back on those first few years of your career, whether it's karting or whatever, and you have rose-tinted spectacles. At the time, I know there was all kinds of stuff going on [paddock politics], but now I look back on it very fondly.

"I did have a very very good season in that first year. I won 11 of the 12 races I competed in in Formula First. I won the championship before the end of the year. Somehow, it all seemed to click. It took me aback a little bit, because karting hadn't been that easy for me."

MN: Is the fact you struggled in karting to do with your height?

OG: "I think a bit of it might be. But there is also the fact that my father and I and the people around us, we maybe didn't really get the most from the equipment at the time. There were others that were better and more switched on at it. When we got to cars, it seemed that the playing field was a little bit more level."

MN: We remember your debut in Formula Renault that season midway through 1991 at Snetterton. While all the championship protagonists were ripping lumps out of each other, you went and stuck it on pole at your first attempt!

OG: "Snetterton was my first one, correct. Jason Plato and Bobby Verdon-Roe were battling like crazy over the title. Plato was with Van Diemen and Bobby was with Swift, so it was intense. I joined Bobby in an extra Fortec car. I put it on pole position.

"I think that I flattered myself in getting pole because when it came to the race, it was clear that I really didn't have enough experience in the car. I didn't know how to look after the tyres or understand how to race. I didn't know about the downforce, or even how to start one, and I got swallowed up. Then I did a race at Donington in 1991 too, and that didn't go to plan either."

MN sets the scene: To underline the meteoric progress Gavin made through the ranks, he became the third recipient of the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award, which then offered £20,000 to an aspiring young racer making his way through the ranks. Gavin fended off rivals Jonathan McGall, Dario Franchitti, Dino Morelli, Jamie Spence and Guy Smith in 1991.

Question: Were you surprised to win the McLaren Autosport Young Driver of the Year so quickly? You'd only been in car racing for a single season…

Jon Wood
Vis email

OG: "As always you go into it thinking that you have *got* to win. I remember it being the first question that Murray Walker asked me when I got onto the stage: he said 'what do you think your chances are of winning?' I told him they were one in six! I backed myself, but I think the thing that played in my favour was that I had raced in all of the other cars that they had for the shootout. I had done Formula Ford, Formula Renault and Formula Vauxhall Lotus. They knew they couldn't test me in those, so they put me in an Alan Docking Racing Formula 3 car. But I had managed to have a sneaky test in an F3 car at Snetterton just before the shootout. I am not sure that was strictly allowed, but we had an inkling it was going to happen so I went out and arranged some experience for myself. When I got in Docking's car for the test, it was a different chassis but I had a bit of an idea about how it would go. I went out of the pits at Donington on the very first lap on cold tyres and I had the biggest tankslapper coming off of Redgate. I knew it would either all be fine or the whole thing was over at that point if I shunted. I managed to keep it on. And I was quick, which helped.

"All of the driving stuff went well, but when it came to the physical stuff, I just crumbled. I was terrible. The only thing I was alright at was running. It was an eye-opener, and ever since then, I have been as keen as mustard on the training side of things. It taught me a lesson. To win it was really special."

Question: What was it like meeting Ayrton Senna [at the awards]?

AutoTradition
Via Twitter

OG: "I still look back on that night. It was one of those moments in life. It has to be one of the top things that has ever happened in my career. At that point, he was at the height of his powers. I have been to lots of Autosport Awards nights since, but that night: no-one else has ever got the same level of respect as he had that night. He stood up and spoke and nobody moved, everyone seemed to hold their breath while he was talking and you could have heard a pin drop. He captivated everyone with his presence with the way he carried himself and his command of the English language was amazing. It was a real pinch-me moment. I was stumbling over my words when I was talking to him, but I remember him saying that he hoped it was the first of many big awards and trophies that I would receive. It was lovely. He was warm and generous and a really special moment for me."

MN sets the scene: After finishing as runner up in Formula 3 in 1993 to Kelvin Burt in the Paul Stewart Racing-run car, Gavin decided to make the leap straight up to Formula 3000 in 1994, but it was hard going and he only started three races…

Question: Why was Formula 3000 such a struggle for you?

Emma Facey
Via email

OG: "We'd come off the back of the Formula 3 season in 1993 where it had gone pretty well but we hadn't won. Kelvin Burt was a more experienced and better driver, and I was still learning. I had the speed, but I was struggling to put it all together. We wanted to keep the momentum going and so we jumped out of F3 and into F3000. Pacific Motorsport and its boss Keith Wiggins was trying to get us involved with F3000, but he had his own plans to take his team to Formula 1 by that stage. He was promising us a lot purely because he was desperately trying to get his grand prix team going. He had seen what Eddie Jordan had done and was sitting there thinking that he had beaten Jordan as a team in Formula 3 or Formula 3000, so why shouldn't the have a shot at F1?

"I ended up racing for the Omegaland team because Pacific couldn't run us. Keith was saying he could run us in F3000 at the same time as building up his Formula 1 team. We went to the race shop and it was tiny. It was barely big enough to run an F3000 team, let alone create an F1 team too. It dawned on us too late that it wasn't going to work out, and we had to go and find any drive we could, and it was Omegaland. They promised the earth but didn't deliver."

Question: How close were you to making it into Formula 1?

Barry May
Via email

OG: "After 1994, I went back to Formula 3 with Peter Briggs and Edenbridge. All the cards were on the table that season, we knew it had to work for us. Peter wanted us to drive the car, he was grabbing money from all places, we had a little bit from Vauxhall and we were using its engine. It was bits and pieces. We scraped it all together and we just about had enough money – I think Peter was putting some of his own finances into it too. We won, and we beat Paul Stewart Racing and it was a fantastic season."

MN: It seems like Peter Briggs and you had a very tight relationship?

OG "Yes, we did. He was just a great team owner. If he believed in you, he believed in you absolutely and without question. There were no ifs, buts and maybes. He totally backed you. He is an incredible guy when you think back to all he did in the early days of March and working with Ronnie Peterson and people like that. And he totally supported me."

MN: That rescued your career, didn't it, coming back to F3 and winning?

OG: "Yes, it really did and I have to thank Peter for that and the opportunity it gave me. So I had won the championship and then I went on to the Pacific thing. We had got an agreement with Keith Wiggins, he had told us he was going to put me in F1 for the last grand prix of the season, the Australian Grand Prix in Adelaide. I was going to be in the car that had been raced up to that point by Bertrand Gachot. Bertrand was going to take a sabbatical.

"I got there and did the lot: I was fitted into the car, I had done my interview with Murray Walker, all of it. I'd met all the team. That was on the Tuesday, then on the Wednesday I was back in the car and having another seat fitting, sorting the wing mirrors and things like that. As I was doing the mirrors, I was lining them up and obviously I had a view of the back of the garage. I could see that Keith had turned up with Gachot in tow – Bertrand wasn't even supposed to be there. I was thinking 'this doesn't look good'. Then all the mechanics just disappeared and Keith came to the car and said 'you'd better get out Olly'. He told me there had been a problem with my Superlicence. He said they didn't seem likely to get me in the car that weekend. I went straight down to try and find Bernie Ecclestone's office to try and find out what was going on.

"I was in his waiting room for about 90 minutes and then he came out to see me. He was lovely, charming, but very straightforward though. He said 'Oliver, we would love to have you in the championship, but you haven't tested the car, have you?' I said no – I had done 10 laps in the 1994 car in the rain at Snetterton when it had F3000 suspension on the right side and Formula 1 suspension on the left side…Then Bernie said 'You have never raced or tested an F1 car properly, have you?' I said no, although I had done 10 laps in a McLaren around Silverstone in the rain before. Then Bernie said 'You've never driven here, at Adelaide, before, have you?' I said no. All the stuff he was pointing out was fair enough, straightforward and honest. He said the team was going out of business and they wouldn't be on the grid next year, and he

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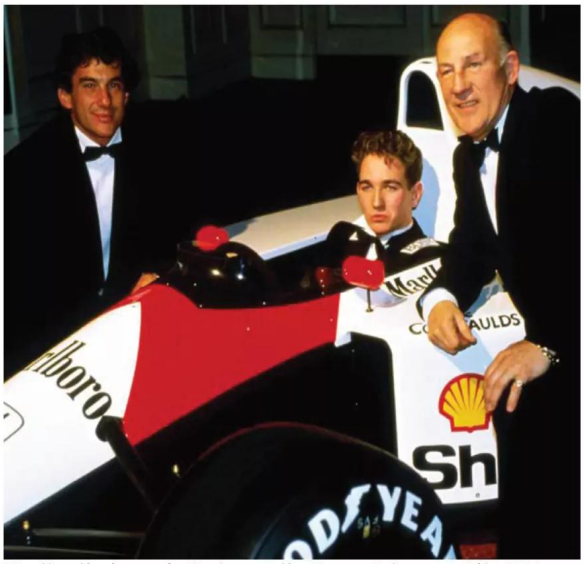
FEATURE



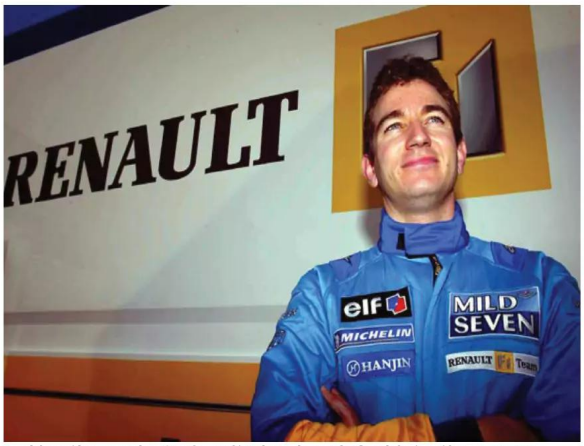
Meeting the legends: Gavin won the Young Driver award in 1991

The team dream: Daytona in 2016

Seeking salvation with Schubot in 2000

Making a mark: the step back to F3 in 1995 paid off handsomely

Benetton and Renault helped Gavin get paid as a Formula 1 driver



Making the grade: Gavin suited and ready for his testing career

said it was too late to get a licence arranged anyway. That was it. Who knows what the real reason was behind it?"

Question: How come you ended up with a testing role for Renault in Formula 1?
Russell Scobbie
Via email
OG: "I had done a season in the International Touring Car Championship for Opel in a Calibra in 1996. During that, I got to know a few people and there was an engineer at Mercedes who then went to Benetton. He called me up out of the blue. He asked what I was doing the next day. He asked if I could get to Silverstone the next day. Benetton had a sponsor, FedEx, and they had a car in its colours and they needed someone to come and do 10 laps to show it off to the backers. I was almost the same size as Alexander Wurz, who was the regular tester. Wurz was in Japan doing some work with sponsors, and so they asked me to drive.

"I turned up, jumped in and the car fit like a glove. I did the 10 laps in the rain. They were happy with what I had done, and so they said I should continue running for the rest of the day. At the end of the day, they told me how much there were going to pay me for the day's work, and it was more than I had ever earned in any day up to that point. Then they asked me to do two more days in the rain...

"From 1997 through to 2006, I drove off and on for Benetton and then Renault. Pat Symonds was there, proper people. I was mostly doing work on the launch systems as well as proper testing, and Renault was known for having some of the best launches out there..."

MN sets the scene: After the race options in single-seaters fell by the wayside, Gavin looked at other avenues to reignite his career. A part-campaign in the USA was his salvation, and it would lead to an almost 20-year association with Chevrolet.

Question: How did you view sportscars when you did the races in 2000 in the USA? Did you think it was going to be your future?
Jack Crowther
Via email
OG: "Well, I had pretty much exhausted all of my options here in the UK and Europe. Keith Wiggins was the sales director at Lola by that stage, and I called him up. I asked if there was any way I could get into a sportscar in the USA. He said he could get me in with a guy called Scott Schubot. Schubot had four McDonalds restaurants in Florida. Scott had just bought a B2K/10 Lola, and Keith worked to put me in that car, although I would have to bring some money. I came back home to see my wife Helen, and she was pregnant with my daughter Lilly. I told her about the opportunity and I told her how much it was going to cost, and it was effectively all of our savings. Helen gave me her blessing and so I took all of our money, in cash, in a briefcase and flew to the US. I gave it all to this guy Scott and literally watched all of our savings walk out the back of the garage...

"It was one of those weekends: although it didn't work out completely, I did enough to put myself on the map in the US. I qualified on pole but we had a technical infringement and I had to start from the back and got up to second. Then there were some battles and I gave this guy a puncture. He got me back later in the race and we were taken out. That ended OK, I think we finished fourth. But, off the back of that, I got a relationship going with Jon Field [in an Intersport Lola] and I ended up driving for him for a number of races. Jon said I could drive for him, but I would have to get myself there. I paid for it. Then after a few races he said he would pay for my flights. Then, by the end of the year, he was paying all my expenses and a little bit of money. That led on to opening a relationship with Saleen to drive the S7R."
MN: Is it right that you got tapped up on the podium at one race by Chevrolet?
OG: "I drove for Jon at Watkins Glen and I think we'd finished second. The trophies were being given out by Ron Fellows [a former NASCAR and Chevrolet Racing driver at the time]. He came over and handed me the trophy and asked if I had time for a chat after the ceremony was over. We went behind the rostrum and he gave me the number for Doug Fehan [Chevrolet Racing boss]. Fellows asked me what my plans were for 2002. He told me there could be an option with Chevrolet. I called Doug and the next time I went over to the US, he said that they would love to have me on board because they had been keeping an eye on me. I tested the car at Sebring in November in front of [Chevrolet Racing's] Gary Pratt, and that was it."
MN: What did you think of the C5-R when you first drove it?
OG: "It was like a force of nature. I drove the thing down the pitlane and it was so deafeningly loud I thought I had forgotten my earplugs. But no, that was just the car. The vibration, everything. When I released the pitlane speed limiter, the thing was just wild. The torque was amazing, the power... it did move around a bit and you had to tame it, but once you had, the thing was an absolute beast. It was brilliant to drive, great fun. You could get yourself in crazy situations with slides and moments that you thought were never going to work out, but the car would come back to you. Not that you could just

Gavin won his first Le Mans with Chevy in 2002

put it in any gear, but it was seven litres and it was V8. It would just yank off any corner with the epic grunt it had."

Question: Which is your favourite 24-hour race?
Damien Doherty
Via email
OG: "I have to say Le Mans, partly because it has the shortest night. The atmosphere that the race generates is almost mystical."
MN: Is Le Mans actually a difficult circuit to master?
OG: "It is. You are driving around there with no downforce on the car and the thing is moving around all the time. If the car is hooked up and you are in the groove, it is one of the greatest places to drive – of all the tracks in all the world. But if the car is not right, it is super super scary and really not a nice place at all. If you drop a little bit of performance or you can't quite get the tyre in the window, or there is one characteristic of the car that isn't working, you don't lose a little bit of time, you lose a lot. And then Le Mans can feel like a very very long race. The very first one I did was 2001 in a Saleen and it rained for 18 hours…I was driving down the Mulsanne and night in the rain, and I was asking myself what I was doing. It was nuts. The water was pouring in through the hinges of the door…"

Question: Was there any driver you always wanted to be paired with but weren't? And who would you refuse to share a car with?
Malcolm Munt
Via email
OG: "I have been in the same team as Antonio Garcia for so many years and we are great mates, but we have never been paired up for some reason. We travel together and train together, but we've only ever had to race against each other, which is a pain in the arse because he is so good!"
MN: And who would you not want to share a car with?
OG: "Interesting: probably Darren Turner, because he is too short…"

Question: Which is the most dangerous track you've raced at? There has to be one in America?
Donny Matthews
Via email
OG: "A lot of the tracks in the US are riskier than certain tracks in Europe. They have a lot of character and they keep you very honest. And over there, there are only very few times where track limits gets called out anywhere, so everyone is pushing the edge. Houston was pretty dodgy, and Baltimore too was crazy. Their attitude over there is: you've signed all the waivers, we are all grown-ups, let's get on with it!"

Question: Are Aussie V8s as hard as they seem?
Andy Murrell
Via email
MN: You did a couple of races over there and got a podium at Bathurst , but it seems European drivers struggle…
OG: "Yes they are hard. Some of it is the way the spool differential works. It is also the way the suspension and uprights are, the tyres too. Also, there are no driver aids. You are fundamentally putting 600bhp plus through rear wheels on a heavy car with skinny tyres and it is a small window to operate in. Make no mistake, the guys over there who can tame the cars are doing an amazing job. They are really good drivers. It requires such a unique driving style, and you really have to work on it. I loved the racing out there: it takes the good bits of racing in the US and in Europe, and it puts it all together in a raw and fun way. The guys out there are brutally tough and honest, but they love what they do. It was great craic."

Question: Why is now the time to step down? Which achievement will you back on most fondly, professionally?
Fiona Stevenson
Via email
OG: "I will answer the last bit first. I look back and 51 wins with Chevrolet is something I am proud of. Three in a row in 2004, 2005 and 2006 at Le Mans against Prodrive – be that Ferraris or Aston Martins – is pretty special. When I took the flag in 2015 to get my fifth win at La Sarthe, that will stay with me. The five titles in IMSA was great. Also the win at Daytona in 2016 when I was having to race my team-mate Antonio Garcia for the last half an hour…I knew that the president of General Motors was there sitting on the timing stand and he told us we could race but we couldn't touch. I knew that if we touched and something went wrong, one of us would have to go back to the garage, collect our things from the truck and not come back again! It was a great win, by just 0.03s."
MN: And why are you stepping down?
OG: "I had recognised that things were changing at Corvette Racing. With the pandemic and all the other things that have come along, I had to look at what my options were for the future. There is some stuff that is happening right now that is good, promising and great. It will take a little while longer than I had planned to get it up and running, but I will still be around. There will be something for me to drive this year, but I just can't say what it is right now." ■

Glory in '15: Gavin drove the final stint at Le Mans for win number five

Gavin's first Le Mans was in 2001, and it rained for most of the race

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FEATURE

SLIPPERY ANNE: RECREATING A 1920s RACER

The Austin 7 was the forerunner to many specials, and Paul Lawrence looks at the story of one of the most well-known

Atkinson has recreated a classic Austin 7 racer

The recreated machine has the most basic of controls, recalling the original 1925 Brooklands racer

In the 1920s, Austin 7-based specials were a popular choice for any form of motorsport. 'Slippery Anne' was one of the well-known single-seater A7 specials and Mark Atkinson has now painstakingly recreated this Brooklands racer.

Working from little more than photographs and period texts, the recently retired aviation engineer from Lytham in Lancashire has spent several years turning an ambition into a reality and car was running in time to compete at Prescott in September. Atkinson plans to tackle a range of Vintage Sports-Car Club speed events in his creation but is determined to keep the car in as close to period specification as possible and not develop it beyond its period trim.

Atkinson explains: "I'm very interested in the methodology they used in period and how that evolved to what we use today. I worked in the aviation business and was always interested in how we could take things further, so this probably appealed. It is a relatively complex car to build if you don't have a set of drawings. We just had photographs and period texts but there was a lot of spurious rubbish written about it. There is nobody left alive to talk to about the car."

The original Slippery Anne was built by John (Jake) Pares and raced by George Coldicutt, who went on to race for the works Austin team at Brooklands. The work began in 1924 and the car was used in competition from 1925 through to the end of the decade.

The origin of the name of Slippery Anne has been the subject of some debate but is thought to refer to a 'siren of the desert' who would lure unwary travellers but was too fast and beautiful to be caught.

"It had a pretty illustrious record," said Atkinson. "In its time, it established some records at Brooklands where it was raced regularly though the mid-1920s and it took class successes at Shelsley Walsh."

After several seasons, Pares duly sold Slippery Anne to Basil Cooke and brothers Cedric and Ken Bouckley. Cedric Bouckley's son Jeremy is a keen historic racer as well as being a prime mover in the Curborough sprint course near Lichfield and has given the project enthusiastic support.

In the late 1920s, the new owners of Slippery Anne used the public road up Saintbury Hill near Broadway for practice as it had a similar gradient to Shelsley Walsh. Later, the special was sold to an airman from Norfolk who, against advice, wanted to use it on the road and was sadly killed in an accident only a few weeks later and the car was written off.

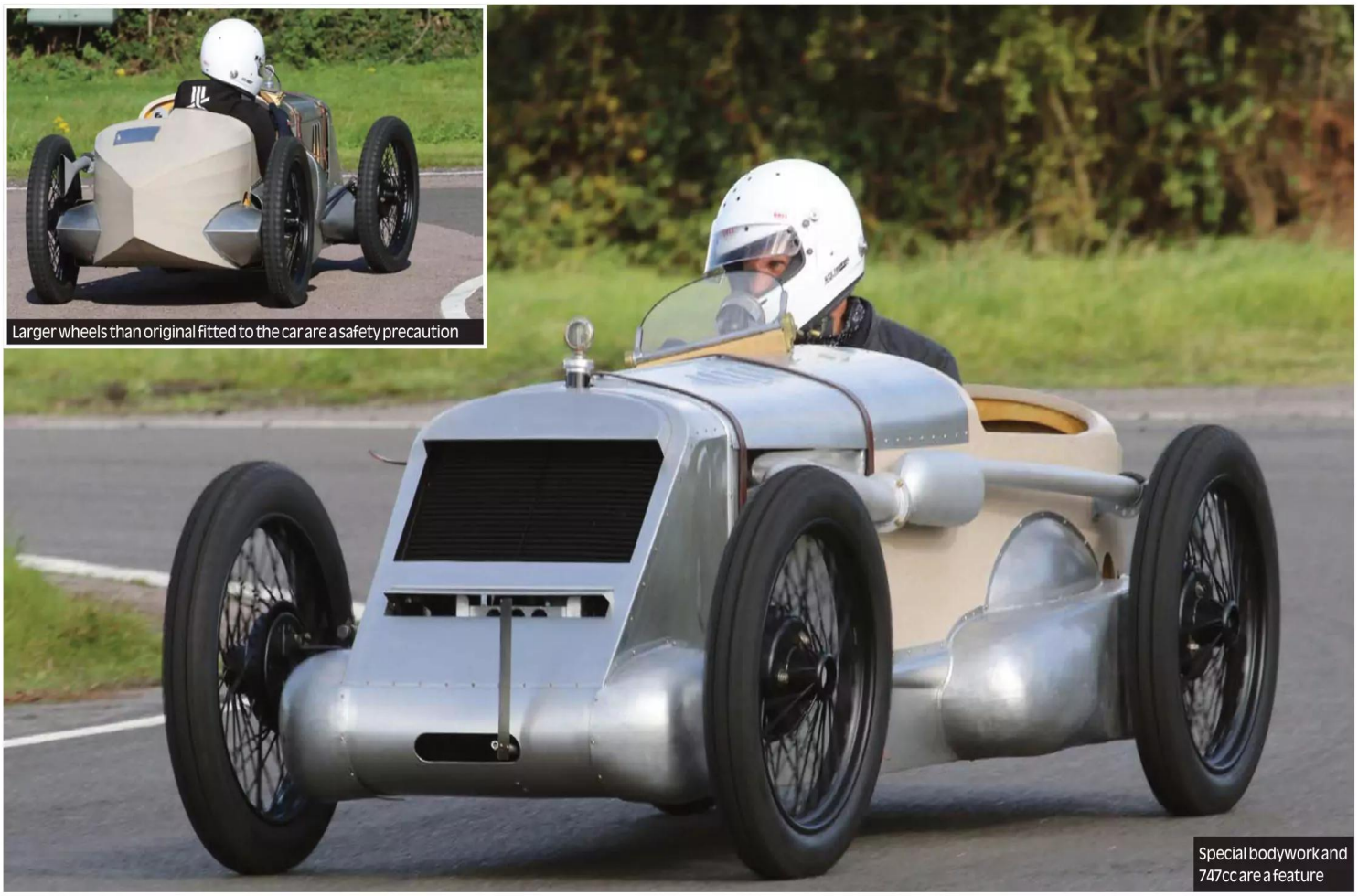
Atkinson explained his reasoning behind starting the project, 80 years on from the demise of the original Slippery Anne. "I'm an engineer by trade and I build things and I've always been involved in conservation activities. I knew about this car for a long time and it was the first supercharged Austin racing car. It used a supercharger that Austin made themselves."

He describes the process of gathering information as a case of pursuit and hard work aided by the generosity of people. "Through that route I went from having no information to having about 100 photographs and managed to work out what the chassis looked like. That was partly from the photographs and partly from logic and from discounting some of what had been written.

"I got a period Austin 7 chassis that was in a bad state but there is very little of a standard Austin 7 chassis within Slippery Anne. Then the generosity of strangers started bringing things to me: not just photographs but components from the original car. John Pares' daughter was

Photos: Paul Lawrence

Larger wheels than original fitted to the car are a safety precaution



Special bodywork and 747cc are a feature

named after the car. I made the faux pas of asking if the car was named after her but she pointed out that she was not that old!"

After several years, Atkinson had drawn up what he thought the chassis should be and went to a chap called Mike New, a renowned Austin 7 expert who is on the eligibility committee of the Vintage Sports-Car Club.

"He did the bare bones of the chassis for me, based on those drawings," says Atkinson. "So I picked up the bits I'd started with and began putting her together. I'd reached the point, after 40 years in my career, that I wanted to retire, and did so five years ago.

"I built the car, in every respect, to be like it was back in the day. Many of the cars with the VSCC today have been developed to the point where they are extraordinarily fast. But that wasn't the intention with this car. Using the larger wheels is entirely a safety thing. She should really have the smaller spindly wheels, but she does have the six-inch brakes she had back in 1925."

For the engine, Atkinson went to Alex Myall at Pigsty Racing near Gatwick.

Mark Atkinson: meticulous detail

"Alex is an exceptional engineer in my judgement and is also a man of great generosity when it comes to sharing knowledge and when I didn't have any, he filled in the gaps," reports Atkinson.

The power source is a simple 1924 747cc Austin 7 engine. In the day, Slippery Anne ran with various sizes of bored-out engine, but Atkinson went with the standard 747cc.

"A chap in California made the supercharger for me," he continues. "I used to work in California when I worked on the F35 jet programme, so I have a great respect for American engineers. He made me a beautiful little supercharger as an approximation of what was in the car. He managed to make something that looked pretty close if not perfectly the same."

Power output at the moment, with a normal exhaust, is around 60bhp. Atkinson explains: "It should be good for about 70bhp, but we'd have to put different gearing on and spin the supercharger a bit faster and fit a better exhaust."

Keeping faith with 1924 technology, the chassis and engine are clothed in a body made of wood and covered in linen and Atkinson's attention to detail and engineering skills are clear to see. He says: "It has a very light body, mostly made from English ash, which is very straight grained, as used for the coachwork in many cars of the period.

"The wood is covered in aircraft-standard Irish linen, which is what it would have been back in the day. There are modern linens which are easier to use and last forever, but that wasn't in the spirit of the project. I now need to paint it with silver dope to protect the linen from the UV rays, which they did in period."

So, what inspired Atkinson to build a faithful recreation of a one-off, 96-year-old racing special? "It's a mixture of things," he ponders. "A big motivator is having a car which is as close as I could get it to back in the day. There are one or two parts of the original car in there, but I've stopped telling people what they are!"

There are also one or two detail changes, which Atkinson is happy to point out: "I had to go with an aluminium radiator because it is angled at 45 degrees and the VSCC graciously said that was OK as long as it was painted black. Making it out of brass would have been challenging and taken years before I got into the queue at the suppliers and would have cost a considerable amount of money. It's very hard to tell the difference now it's in the car."

Though initially a labour of engineering love, Slippery Anne is most definitely going to be used in anger and driven in competitive events and should be seen in 2021 in a range of VSCC sprints and hillclimbs.

There have already been several exploratory outings in the late summer of 2020. "It went to Curborough in August and a week later it ran at David Leigh's charity event. She went to Prescott for her first competitive hillclimb with the VSCC at the end of September. That was an interesting experience," says Atkinson.

"She's got a 1923 rear axle, which is exactly what she had in period, so I'm very gentle off the line. I don't want to tear it apart. But we were about 10s slower than everyone else in our class and that was probably entirely because of the slow start!

However, chasing competition results is not what this project is primarily about. It was born of an ambition to take on a 1920s engineering project and build a remarkably faithful replica of a state-of-the-art single-seater racer from close to 100 years ago.

"It has created a considerable amount of interest and that's been very rewarding," says Atkinson. "For people to see it, and recognise what the car was, is super." ■

Everything vintage about the Speed Championship's thrills

The VSCC Speed Championship is major element of the annual motorsport programme from the Vintage Sports-Car Club and offers the perfect platform for owners to enjoy their cars away from the pressure of racing.

The long-established championship has classes for just about any Pre-War car in both standard and modified specification and also has classes for racing cars and invited cars from the 1950s.

A typical season takes in eight events, with sprints at venues like Curborough and Goodwood, while hillclimbs at Prescott, Shelsley Walsh, Wiscombe Park, Loton Park and Harewood complete an attractive calendar. The annual Prescott weekend in early August is a real highlight of the VSCC season and such is the demand for places that the event is capped at 275 entries.

There is competition right across the classes and at the top of the field there are some incredibly quick times being set. At Shelsley Walsh, for instance, leading ERAs have climbed the 1000-yard hill several seconds quicker than they did in the 1930s and set times that would have earned 'fastest time of the day' awards well into the 1960s.

But this is not just a championship for ERAs and it is also a perfect home for those who drove their standard Pre-War sportscar to the venue, take out the family and the picnic basket, stick some numbers on and go competing.

Eight events make up Vintage Sports-Car Club Speed contest

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FEATURE

Quinn was stunning in the damp at Spa

YOU'LL NOT SEE NOTHING LIKE THE MIGHTY QUINN

Precocious Brit Alex Quinn has had his share of ill-luck so far in his fledgling driving career. But in 2020 he got a timely reboot, as he explains to Graham Keilloh

After almost two years' enforced downtime Quinn is back on track

Most drivers do not hold out much hope of race victory when starting from 12th place, as Alex Quinn did for Formula Renault Eurocup's second race at Spa-Francorchamps last October.

But it was Spa, where weather is notorious at the height of summer, let alone murky autumn. As all gathered on the grid the track was damp but drying, though were those spots of rain? Some went for a last-gasp switch to slicks.

Quinn stuck with wets and was quickly vindicated, yet even compared to those similarly shod his progress was stunning. After a lap he was fifth, after two he was second. A third of the way into the 30-minute race he'd got by team-mate Ugo De Wilde for first. Then he was never seen again, leading home an Arden 1-2 and taking his maiden category win.

"It was probably the highlight of my career as well as the year," Quinn tells Motorsport News. "I had a bit of damage in qualifying which is why we [started 12th]. We'd been very quick in the wet and the dry throughout free practice; I knew that you could overtake at Spa, so I wasn't too negative.

"The car was great. It was a race I enjoyed because after half distance I could see I had a good gap and I could relax.

"It was really really special, not just for me it was the whole team, no-one could stop smiling. I remember walking into the office and just looking at the two engineers and them just grinning. I won't forget that any day."

The team's mood wasn't only due to the extraordinary race and result, as Quinn's Arden Eurocup boss Ben Salter explains to MN. "In race one Reshad De Gerus, his team-mate, crashed at the top of Eau Rouge, completely ripped the rear end of the car off," he says. "We finished at about 0500hrs, went back to the hotel, we were back at the track for 0730hrs. And even then we still had more work to do on the car. The car was finished one minute before the cars had to leave to go to the race, so then to get the 1-2 finish was something special. My proudest day since I've been at Arden, that's for sure."

It helped Quinn to fourth overall in the final Eurocup standings as well to the rookie championship crown. And Quinn's achievements were yet more remarkable, as the 20-year-old taking part at all in the 300bhp single-seater championship was, for a time, a long shot.

"I was originally going to be racing with another team [in Eurocup]," Quinn notes, "and because of coronavirus and certain things, sponsors etc, that fell through just literally a week and a few days before we were flying to the first race."

But for Quinn there was a flipside. Arden's intended driver Australian Jackson Walls was unable to travel due to Covid's restrictions. The team, familiar with Quinn, snapped him up for the first two rounds at Monza then Imola. And Quinn promptly put the car on Monza pole, plus was only a second shy of winning.

"[That] was the stuff dreams are made of," Salter says. "He was strong right from the word go. And then [we] went to Imola, the second round, [he] had another podium there, both at tracks he'd never been to."

Quinn adds: "That was one of the highlights getting pole at the first round. It was really good because Monza everyone says you rely on a tow, but we just went out and done it on our own and the car was feeling very good for what was my first time in the car that year, no testing, no nothing. And [to] go out there and put it on pole, we were so happy."

The next round though wasn't for a month and it looked like Walls would reclaim his seat. "But it then started to head towards the second [Covid] spike," Salter recalls, "and he decided to not come back across. So Alex got the seat, still on a race-by-race basis but he was doing such a good job in the end it turned into the complete season which was really good and he had a really really strong season."

This furthermore came after two years for Quinn without full-time racing. He was a member of the Racing Steps Foundation and, after bagging seven British Formula 4 wins in two years as well as fourth in 2017's championship, he then planned a Eurocup switch. But RSF stopped and Quinn was left high and dry, facing the familiar budget barrier to opportunities.

Quinn therefore for 2018 went for more cost-effective British GT where he again showed fine form in a GT4 Toyota. But… then his Steller team pulled out mid-year. "I was left sitting at home again," Quinn muses. The softly-spoken Cornishman couldn't catch a break it seemed.

That was until late August in 2019, when he got a call from Arden about a Eurocup opportunity. "[I] was asked to come and fill in for Sebastian Fernandez," Quinn recalls. "I still remember the first time at Nurburgring getting back in the car and I was really nervous because it had been basically two years with no racing, no nothing.

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FEATURE

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Rally Gallery

Ypres joined BRC in 2017

BRITAIN'S BELGIAN LOVE AFFAIR

In recent years British championships have crossed the Channel to Belgium for points-scoring rounds, but not in 2021. Luke Barry finds out why and examines if the European trip will be missed

British champion Edwards always enjoyed the trip to Belgium

Pritchard has never finished a Belgian rally but still loves it because of the adventure and social aspects

There's a real sense of irony to this feature that MN wrote before the news broke that Ypres would be joining the World Rally Championship in place of the UK's round. Why? Because British rallying has actually long been a fan of Belgian rallying.

In 2017, the British Rally Championship organisers elected to include the Ypres Rally on their schedule while Asphalt Championship bosses followed suit a year later inducting Rally van Wervik into theirs.

However it's fair to say this wasn't a move that thrilled the pedants among us: a Belgian rally in a British championship. Whether you agree with that viewpoint or not, there's no denying it was a bold decision to take a national series to an entirely different nation. British drivers heading to Ypres for example as part of a wider programme is nothing new – particularly in the 1990s with drivers like Mark Higgins – but a points-paying British round held on Belgian soil had never been seen before.

Nevertheless, following discussions midway through the 2016 Nicky Grist Stages, BRC championship manager Iain Campbell tells MN that a rally of Ypres' stature with an electric atmosphere and "razzmatazz" was what the competitors wanted, and "we didn't have something to offer in the UK from that point of view".

Campbell, therefore, made a phone call to Alain Penasse – the president of the Ypres organising club as well as Hyundai's WRC team manager – to ask his thoughts on taking the BRC to a different event in Belgium, to which Penasse immediately suggested: 'why don't you come to Ypres?' A quick visit was then arranged and a deal to bring the BRC to Belgium was agreed.

"Ypres has a huge reputation," Campbell tells Motorsport News. "When we went there in 2017 there was a whole lot of panic from us and from the competitors because of the unknown; the regulations are very detailed and there was a lot of worry about how these things would go but it actually went so smoothly it was unbelievable. And the welcome we've always had has been phenomenal. Everybody that went loved it."

The very same Ford Fiesta R5 (chassis 200, PX66 DZT) has taken maximum championship points from Ypres en route to that year's British title. Keith Cronin bossed the Flanders fields in 2017 before Matt Edwards took the spoils in 2018 and '19 in spite of car trouble on both occasions. Edwards tells MN Ypres is one of his favourites.

He says: "I think the sense of the occasion is unrivalled to anything else the BRC does. That's not to detract from the organisers of the [other] BRC events, it's more the general public that make that event, just the general popularity over there makes it a great sense of occasion. The challenge of going somewhere else with a great strength in depth of the entry as well just makes for a really good all-round event."

It's a similar story for Rally van Wervik in the Asphalt series too. Champion of the last two years Jason Pritchard has had no luck in Belgium – starting four events in his career and failing to finish any of them – but has unrivalled enthusiasm for the culture and the style of the events.

"I'm never going to refuse to go to Belgium," he says. "Part of doing a rally is not just the rally it's the adventure, the bit behind it all as well: going to the event, the atmosphere, the trip of it, it's not just on the stages it's everything so going to Belgium is one we all enjoy. We go Ypres to watch it every year [let alone compete]. Everyone makes you feel welcome there, it's a good atmosphere, it's sociable. It's what we go rallying for."

A British takeover in Belgium

The nature of the stages are another big draw too. Traditionally relatively flat with deep cuts, "it's a different challenge," according to Pritchard: "You've got the cuts, it's a challenge and you want challenges in life."

That challenge can be both a blessing or a hindrance though. For Tom Cave, who fought Edwards for the 2019 British title, it's proved to be the latter.

He admits he's always found the event tricky and says it has never flowed for him. That means he's aware it's always potentially going to be an Achilles' heel for him. He says: "The locals in Belgium, they know it like the back of their hand. They know where to cut, they know where not to cut and that's the key because if you cut a little bit too deep you get these culverts that are coming out onto the side of the road and if you clip one of them, at best you're going to rip a wheel off or worst you're going to end up having a big accident.

"I wasn't comfortable going into that event from the outset [in 2019], even from the [pre-event] test I didn't feel comfortable in the car I didn't make it public to people then. It was quite evident on the free practice when I ended up going off, it's because I just didn't know where the limit of the car was on those roads. It was either 11 tenths or eight tenths, it wasn't in the middle. I was always over the limit or I wasn't going hard enough. It's a tricky old place, Belgium."

Cuts are key to Ypres success

Subjective adaptation to the stages aside, there are other drawbacks to heading to Belgium as part of a championship, notwithstanding the ease of travel there (pre-Brexit, at least) as Pritchard points out. "For those in the south of England it's easier for them to get there than to Epynt or something like that," he says.

It may be easier for some to get to, but it's also a lot heavier on the wallet. So in amid the Covid-19 pandemic and the presently unknown variable of Brexit, it's perhaps not hard to see why – despite the clear enthusiasm for the events – both Ypres and Rally van Wervik have been dropped from their respective British calendars. Cave says: "It is a very expensive rally, I can honestly say that to you. I won't give you a figure but it was certainly the most expensive on the calendar by 20-30%. We've already done a budget [for this year] and it does work out around 20% cheaper than it was compared to 2019 so from that respect I think it's the right decision not having it on the calendar."

There's more to it than expense, though. Wervik's absence from the Asphalt schedule was confirmed before coronavirus as more closed-road events in the UK arose so the absence looks to be for the longer-term, but a BRC return to Ypres hasn't been ruled out by Campbell.

"Put it this way, I would love to go back," says Campbell before confirming cost and Brexit were factors in the event being dropped from the 2021 calendar. "But the biggest factor was the unknown impact of Covid on what UK rallying will look like in 2021. It's for exactly the same reason we're not going to West Cork. They're two big events which are generally a week so maybe five days, but realistically it's seven days and that's going to be the issue."

Don't be surprised then to see Ypres back on the British Rally Championship calendar in the future, just perhaps not the near future. The elephant in the room now is whether Ypres disloading GB from the 2021 WRC calendar will spoil all of this goodwill... ■

THE BEST OF BRITAIN IN BELGIUM

Untouchable: Yates in 2018

British rally drivers have taken to Belgian shores and shown the locals a thing or two on several occasions over the years.

Despite coming awfully close in 2020, Ypres has never been a World Rally Championship rally but has always been widely recognised as a world-class event. That means success in the Flanders' fields never goes unnoticed. Enter stage left, Tony Pond.

With his pair of victories in 1978 and '80 behind the wheel of a Triumph TR7 V8, Pond remains to this day the only foreign driver to conquer Ypres Rally twice. His legacy has recently been commemorated by the Tony Pond Trophy and Tony Pond Junior Trophy that was awarded to the highest-placed British Rally Championship and Junior BRC competitor in recent years.

Other Brits to win in Ypres include Jimmy McRae who in 1987 scored a 1-2 for Britain ahead of then-defending British champion Mark Lovell in a brace of Ford Sierra RS Cosworths. Northern Ireland's Kris Meeke also romped to the win in 2009, when the rally was an Intercontinental Rally Challenge counter, on his debut visit to the event. And more recently, Ireland's Craig Breen took top honours in 2019 in a Volkswagen Polo GTI R5.

But there's a strong case to suggest that Rhys Yates' scorching drive to victory on the 2018 Rally van Wervik trumps the lot. Using the Asphalt Rally Championship round as familiarisation for the upcoming Ypres Rally, Yates dominated in his Skoda Fabia R5 to record his first – and so far only – international rally victory and with it a slice of history as the only non-Belgian or French pilot to claim victory in Wervik.

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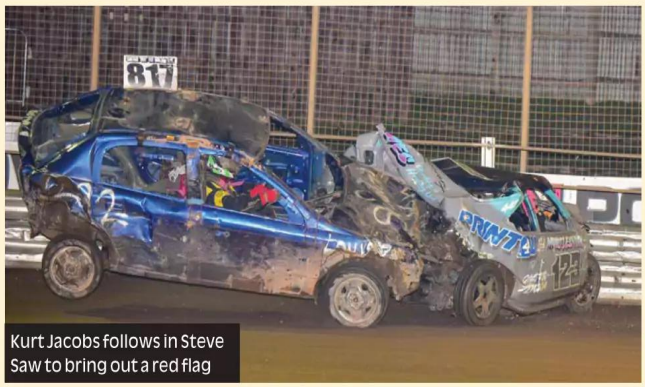
COLUMNIST

DAVID ADDISON

Our columnist-at-large rounded out 2020 with a bang – well, the competitors did

Photos: Matt Bull



Kurt Jacobs follows in Steve Saw to bring out a red flag

Graham Woodward talks to new champion Josh Vowden

It's been a funny old season. It started with a regular trip to Chennai and discovering a frog living in the toilet roll in the circuit's loo, consisted of more visits to Lydden than to Oulton Park which is 20 minutes away from home, and ended with television commentary from the Banger World Final at Ipswich.

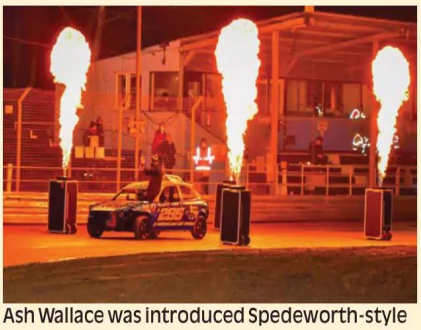
Actually, I need to clarify a little here: there are numerous Banger World Finals, and now different classes of Banger have a World Final. What? A banger is a banger, surely? Oh, no. There are National Bangers, where engine swaps and modifications are more permissible, Back-to-Basics Bangers which tries to go back to the original concept of the class (and if anybody can give me a satisfactory answer to why it was allowed to move away from this, you win a prize…) and then there are 1600cc Bangers (easy) that used to be called Rookie Bangers, to encourage in newcomers. Yawn with your mouths closed, please.

Anyway, one of the positives of lockdown has been Spedeworth TV. Born from the long-standing tradition of a circuit video company, Spedeworth TV has been pioneering programmes all through the year, adding to its subscription service of race meetings. Not only can you watch a race meeting, or just one category if you prefer, there are also some excellent magazine-style programmes featuring racing as well as full-length interviews with some of Spedeworth's stars of the past and present. Fronted by Spedeworth's top commentator Graham Woodward, Back on Track has been a great series, with a well thought out set of features as well as the interviews. Carl Boardley and stock car hero Conrad Self are excellent, should you wish to invest your £12 sub.

But then there is the race action. A few years ago, Suffolk production company Summer Isle Films became involved with productions of the National Hot Rod World Final for Motors TV and that involvement with the sport has grown. When Ipswich Stadium's regular videographer Martin Hunt decided it was time to wind down, Summer Isle Films stepped up to the plate and formed Spedeworth TV initially showing race meetings.

However, cometh the lockdown, cometh the live stream. When Spedeworth tried a behind-closed-doors meeting in July at Aldershot, Tom Newman and his Summer Isle team had a new challenge. Filming the action is the easy part, but the greater complexities come in getting that footage out of the stadium and online.

That has been achieved by a process called cellular bonding, which as I am sure you know, is the process in which two or more cellular modems are combined in an intelligent way that allows the one to use the combined bandwidth. Yeah, thought you knew that.



Ash Wallace was introduced Spedeworth-style

Vowden (c) celebrates a last-gasp final victory

Now, live streams are becoming so common, so popular, that oval racing doing the same isn't really news, you may think. But bear in mind that this is all done on a tiny scale. Think about motor racing as a minority sport and then oval racing as a minority of a minority. There isn't a massive amount of money to throw at this, so Newman and his team have to do it as frugally as possible, but they come up well.

With a locked-off camera on the presenters and a couple of trackside cameras, the rest of the team is four (director, producer and two technical boffins) in the production room, sat beside the commentators. There are gremlins inevitably, largely to do with talkback and audio. But for a tiny team, it is a massively impressive effort and proper thought has gone into the coverage of an event, with a bank of VTs of assorted lengths to play for when the gaps between the races need something to cover them.

And a Banger World Final? Mega! One thing Spedeworth has always done well is the build-up to a major race and even with a reduced crowd, the company carried on that skill. By the time each qualifier has been introduced and done their lap of honour to the grid, you were almost aching for the race to start. Red flags were inevitable, a late-race stoppage giving people a chance to twig that Mark Almeida was leading and heading for this third World title. Nope. He was stopped by lurking traffic on the dash to the flag allowing prolific race-winner Joey Reynolds his chance to score the crown, only to be dislodged on the last bend by Josh Vowden who claimed the title.

Oval racing has a magic of all of its own, but Spedeworth TV brings something extra. You can enjoy it all in the warmth live or at your leisure. Most impressively of all is how that branch of motorsport that people like to sneer at is showing us what can be done.

"Cometh the lockdown, cometh the short oval live stream…"

WHAT'S ON

YOUTUBE

Quinn's gamble at Spa paid off handsomely

In this week's Motorsport News, starlet Alex Quinn and his Arden boss Ben Salter outline a race they pinpoint not only as their high point of last season but their high point more generally. This was Quinn's maiden Formula Renault Eurocup victory at Spa last October.

And as all gathered on the grid for that one they were reminded that it's Spa, and it's October. The track is damp, drying, but also rain is spotting... Encapsulating the conundrum the field splits neatly between opting for slicks and wets. Quinn, starting 12th, went for the latter.

He was vindicated, yet managed to leave even wet-shod rivals gasping with a precipitous rise to victory. The showing was highly remarkable in itself, yet as Salter also explains to MN the result had significance even over and above for the Arden squad.

And thanks to Renault Sport's YouTube channel you can watch the entire race – in addition to Quinn's performance there's plenty of brave battling elsewhere – as well as interviews and the podium. Plus the commentary is by David Addison of this parish. You can find it at youtube.com/watch?v=0mTQLobGp04 or you can search: '2020 Formula Renault Eurocup - Spa-Francorchamps - Race 2'.

Graham Keilloh

TV GUIDE

The desert kings continue the Dakar fight

January is always traditionally a quiet month for motor racing fans, but that doesn't mean there's nothing – and there's plenty to keep you entertained on TV this week.

The live motorsport action comes courtesy of the Dakar Rally, with today (Thursday) marking the 2021 event's penultimate stage. You can catch action of the previous test, SS10, on Eurosport 1 this morning (0800hrs-0830hrs) while tuning in later this evening for today's SS11 action (2305hrs-2335hrs) or on Friday morning (0800hrs-0830hrs).

The final stage, SS12, first screens on Friday evening (2235hrs-2305hrs) on Eurosport 1 before being repeated on Eurosport 2 on Saturday morning (0720hrs-0750hrs). Also on Eurosport 1 this week is an hour-long review of last season's British GT campaign where Sandy Mitchell and Rob Collard emerged as champions (Thursday, 1700hrs-1800hrs).

But sticking with the dirt (well, ice) theme, the second and third rounds of the Andros Trophy will be shown on FreeSports throughout the week. The Andorra round first airs on Friday (0800hrs-0900hrs) with the succeeding event at Isola on Saturday (1130hrs-1230hrs). There's also a preview of the first round of the 2021 World Rally Championship, Rallye Monte-Carlo, for you on Monday (1230hrs-1300hrs, BT Sport 2).

Finally, turn on Sky Sports F1 for some documentaries. A repeat of the fantastic Willy T Ribbs: Motorsport's Black Pioneer is scheduled for Thursday (2330hrs-0030hrs) while you can watch Lewis Hamilton: My Race the following evening on Friday (2230hrs-2300hrs).

Luke Barry

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ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!

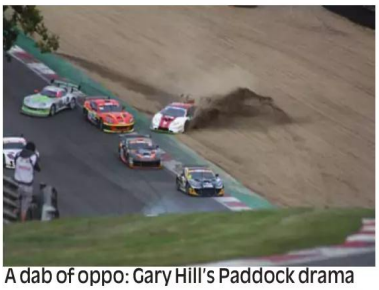
In it for the long haul: the Britcar pack gets ready to tackle Snetterton, by Chris Collier

Chris Noble's shot of a pushing Porsche

Race Car Show in 1975, from Graham Lomax

The late Arthur Harbey's shot of Oulton

A Ferrari out of the gloom, by Sam Nudd



A dab of oppo: Gary Hill's Paddock drama

NEXT WEEK

OUT THURSDAY, JANUARY 21 2021

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READERS' Q&A: JONNY MILNER

The king of the British Rally Championship

PREVIEW THE WRC'S READY TO GO AGAIN

The world rally men queue up for a fresh challenge

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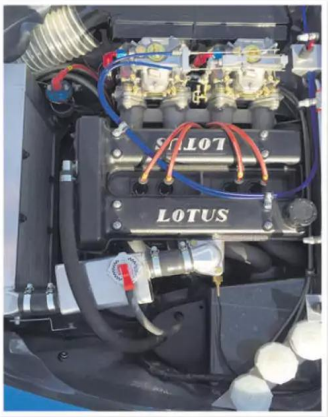

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